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THE JERUSALEM POST

VOLUME LXIII, NUMBER 19158

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1995 • TEVET 4, 5756 • SHAABAN 5, 1416

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MONEY MAGAZINE

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Mordechai to run in Likud primary; Shamir to retire

SARAH HONG

MAJ.-GEN. (res.) Yitzhak Mordechai has decided to run in the Likud primary, but former prime minister Yitzhak Shamir and MK Moshe Nissim have decided it is time to retire.

These are only a few of the developments which became apparent last night as the Likud list of primary candidates was finally closed.

In all, over 100 candidates paid the NIS 5,000 registration fee, of whom 28 are MKs. The primary is scheduled for March 26.

Just minutes before the 9 p.m. deadline, a private messenger delivered registration forms sent in by Mordechai. The envelope included two sets of forms — one making Mordechai a Likud member, the other comprising the primary forms.

Mordechai did not come to Likud headquarters at Metztad Ze'ev and declined all comment yesterday. He is expected to make his formal announcement tonight on Channel 1's *Moked* program.

(Continued on Page 4)



Workers display a just-completed segment of the Ramallah bypass road yesterday.

(Brian Hecker)

IDF pulls out of Ramallah today

HERB KENON

THE IDF closed Ramallah to Israelis last night in advance of its scheduled withdrawal today, a day ahead of schedule. Vehicles are being diverted onto a new bypass road, two segments of which opened yesterday.

The new road will enable access to and from Samaria without passing through Ramallah and Al-Bireh.

The first segment leads from Jerusalem to the settlements of Kochav Ya'acov and Psagot. The second goes from Beit El to the Alon Road and then to Jerusalem. Another segment of the road, linking Ofra with the Alon Road, is still under construction.

"The bypass roads are not roads against terror," OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Ilan Biran said at the opening of the road at Psagot. "We are all obligated to continue the fight against terror. The bypass roads have one main goal: ensuring daily life. That is to say, a mother sends her children to school on a road that does not necessi-

tate approval from the other side [the Palestinian Authority], and the same goes for the mother or father when they go to work."

Deputy Defense Minister Ori Orr said the bypass roads represent a conception of "separation that will make it possible to live together." He stressed that the roads are to serve Arabs as well as Jews; a concern echoed by settlement leaders, who are concerned that if Palestinians do not use the roads, travelers on them could become easy targets for terrorists.

According to Orr, the bypass roads are "not solutions to terror; they give a better feeling to residents. But for those who want to engage in terror, a bypass road or a fence will not stand in their way."

Psagot overlooks Al-Bireh and at one point is just a few hundred meters away. Since its establishment in 1981, the residents of this settlement have

driven through the side streets of Al-Bireh to get to and from their homes, and have suffered innumerable rock, firebomb, and shooting attacks.

The new, 10-kilometer roads to Beit El and Psagot begin just below Jerusalem's Pisgat Ze'ev neighborhood. Residents of Psagot and Kochav Ya'acov have been using their new road for several weeks, while the Beit El segment was completed yesterday.

Last month, Uzi Nevo, of Kochav Ya'acov, was shot and seriously wounded while driving through Al-Bireh on the way to Jerusalem, a route that is now bypassed.

Binyamin Regional Council head Pinhas Wallerstein said the roads will enable Jewish residents to live a more normal life, and no longer feel a need to wear bulletproof vests when driving to Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, Wallerstein said, the roads "invite attacks.

There should be no illusions: bypass roads do not ensure security, they only ensure who is responsible for security on the bypass roads."

Wallerstein, who only a few months ago threatened to shoot Palestinian policemen if they stopped him while driving in Ramallah, said he is ready to meet with the mayor of that city and discuss matters of common concern.

In Judea yesterday, cheers instead of jeers accompanied Israeli border policemen as they prepared to make way for 310 Palestinian policemen who moved into police stations in five large villages near Hebron.

Although Hebron remains under IDF control for three more months, residents treated the occasion as a liberation, distributing flowers and applauding. In Dahariyeh, people climbed all over the prison, as they did when the IDF withdrew from Jenin, Nablus, and Tulkarim.

(Continued on Page 4)

Peres upbeat as talks with Syria begin today

HILLEL KUTTNER, DAVID RUDGE and news agencies

ON the eve of resumption of the peace talks with Syria, Prime Minister Shimon Peres said yesterday he has high expectations and is pleased with the tone emanating from Damascus.

"We have never had better music from the North [Syria] than we have now," Peres said, during a meeting with Christian dignitaries in Haifa.

"I hope this [atmosphere] will continue and improve. It's not peace itself yet ... but the tone sets the music. We will continue to work and hold serious negotiations."

"We know that Syria has many problems. We also have many problems, but we want to create peace, which will meet the interests of both countries, not just one, and which will give security and water to residents of both Israel and Syria."

"We don't want to do in peace what is done in war. In war, one country tries to defeat the other. In peace, one country tries to understand the other," said Peres.

The prime minister stressed that Israel has no territorial claims whatsoever in Lebanon. He maintained that an independent and stable Lebanon would be the best of neighbors.

Peres, who was hosted by Haifa Mayor Amram Mitzna during his day-long visit to the city, also addressed a special meeting of the city council and local dignitaries.

Later, in a question-and-answer session with high school pupils, Peres was asked why the government appeared to be in a hurry to reach an agreement with Syria.

In reply, the prime minister said the tempo of the negotiations until now had been very slow, and that new, innovative solutions are needed.

"Both Yitzhak Rabin, the captain of peace, and myself thought we are both experienced people, and that it was our duty to you [the youth] to make all the difficult and unpopular decisions ... because we thought that if we didn't, nobody would," said Peres.

He noted that peace talks with Syria could be dragged out for another 10 years, but "more people will fall and others will be killed."

Peres maintained that the government is neither acting hastily, nor wasting time. In the end, neither Syria nor Israel would be able to escape having to make very difficult decisions, he added.

The talks, which open today, will be held for three days at the Wye River Conference Center, just east of Maryland's capital of Annapolis.

Israeli, Syrian, and US negotiators will be quartered day and night at the site, to enable discussions to take place at any time.

An Israeli official said he expects the US to play a very active role during the talks, and that, "If the Americans want to present bridging proposals, we won't oppose it."

A senior US official said the new setting for the talks, which is meant to lead an air of informality, is worth trying, given the fact that "we had reached a procedural impasse" using other modes of negotiating.

"You can't force [peace]," peace process coordinator Uri

(Continued on Page 4)

Arafat has editor arrested over slight

BILL HUTMAN

AN *Al-Quds* editor was detained by order of Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat and taken to Jericho for questioning, because of his handling of the eastern Jerusalem newspaper's Christmas story, Palestinian sources said.

Editor Maher Alameh was arrested by Palestinian Preventive Security agents on Monday, the sources said. As of last night he was still being held, although family members believed his release was imminent.

Marwan Abu Zafar, the newspaper's owner, went to Jericho yesterday afternoon to find out about Alameh's well-being. He

said Alameh's wife had become concerned when he did not return home Monday.

Zafar declined to comment on the incident before going to Jericho, and afterwards could not be reached. One source said Alameh was released after Zafar's visit, but this could not be confirmed.

Arafat was angry that Alameh, the senior editor Christmas eve, did not put on the front page a story comparing the PA chairman's relations with the Christian community to those of the seventh century Arab conqueror

Omar el-Khattab, the sources said.

Preventive Security agents on Monday asked Alameh to come to Jericho for questioning, but he refused, the sources said. The agents then forcibly took him there, they added.

"Arafat's trying to interfere with our newspaper is nothing new, but this time he has gone too far," said one *Al-Quds* journalist, who asked not to be identified.

Al-Quds, the mostly widely distributed Arabic-language newspaper in the region, was closed for a short period earlier this year by Arafat.

Court-martial for commander over misrule of IDF prison

LIAT COLLINS

THE commander of Military Prison No. 4 will be court-martialed by Deputy Chief of Staff Maj.-Gen. Matan Vilnai, and two company commanders will leave the IDF, following an investigation into the running of the prison, OC Military Police Brig.-Gen. Niram Goldblum announced this yesterday.

He gave a report on the subject to the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee.

Media reports on the prison spoke of detainees being held for weeks without trial alongside con-

victed soldiers, physical abuse and humiliations inflicted by prison commanders, and poor conditions.

Goldblum said there will be more supervision of Military Police courses, which will be updated.

No problems have been noted at the prison since the recent expose and investigation, according to Chief of Staff Lt.-Gen. Amnon Lipkin-Shahak. "We are talking about failings which go beyond the command level at the prison and we are examining the matter," Shahak said.

Burg: Agency could quickly resettle Golan residents

BATSHEVA TSUR

THE Jewish Agency could resettle Golan residents "within weeks" now that the Treasury has decided to boost the World Zionist Organization's Settlement Division budget by 15%, agency chairman Avraham Burg said yesterday.

On a tour of the Jordan Valley, Burg said that if the government decided to evacuate the Golan Heights, the agency would be able to resettle the residents within a short time, "months or even weeks."

According to the agency spokesman, Burg stressed the agency "had not received any requests to this effect from any side and the agency would not take any steps that would create facts or jeopardize Israel's bargaining position."

The Treasury's additional allocation to the Settlement Department — which handles settlements on the Golan, in the Jordan Valley, and in the Dead Sea area — brings the division's budget to a total of NIS 140 million for fiscal 1996.

Burg yesterday promised that some NIS 30-40m. of the money would be allocated for the Golan settlements, saying they have to be kept viable in the interim period.

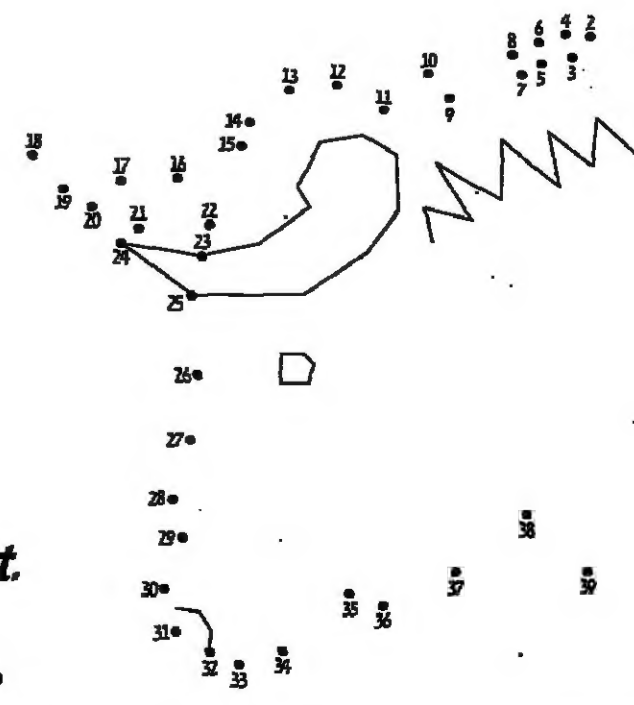
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Merom to Peres: State the price we are prepared to pay for peace with Syria

"THE time has come to tell the people what the principles behind the negotiations with Syria and Lebanon are and what is the price we are prepared to pay," Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee chairman Hagai Merom said yesterday.

Speaking to Knesset reporters, Merom outlined his ideas for negotiations with Syria, which he said he had detailed in a letter to Prime Minister Shimon Peres.

Merom proposed formulating a declaration of principles with Syria within the next three months, to be signed by Peres and Syrian President Hafez Assad and sealed with a handshake. The agreement would then be brought before the people through either a referendum or new elections.

In the second phase of his plan, a detailed agreement could then be drawn up, Merom said.

He suggested that Israel announce it recognizes Syrian sovereignty over the Golan Heights and agree to a withdrawal within

LIAT COLLINS

two years from the date the agreement is signed.

The withdrawal should be to the 1949 international border, not the 1967 borders, he said.

The US would act as guarantor and supervise the implementation of the agreement.

Conditions for the withdrawal should include: complete disarmament in the Golan Heights; a reduction in Syrian forces and their redeployment to avoid the possibility of surprise attacks; ensuring water sources for Israel; full normalization, open borders and diplomatic relations; a Syrian promise to completely stop supporting terror and terrorist organizations; the establishment of satellite, aerial and ground early-warning procedures; and the placement of a multinational force to supervise the implementation of the agreement.

Merom said the principle of mutuality in security arrangements should not mean complete symmetry.

He also proposed establishing

a Middle East Union to determine and promote regional development, on the model of the European Union.

An agreement with Lebanon would be signed simultaneously with the Syrian agreement. It would have to be based on the total cessation of terror activities from Lebanon and attacks on the Galilee area. In return, Israel should withdraw from south Lebanon, he said.

Residents evacuated from the Golan should receive compensation in the manner granted to residents who evacuated the Sinai; Druze villagers with Israeli citizenship would also be eligible for compensation and relocation in Israel.

Merom insisted his ideas are not a "trial balloon," saying he had not consulted with Peres or any of his aides before announcing them.

Merom rejected the possibility that his document could weaken Israel's position at the talks opening today in the US, saying "the price is already well known to everyone."



Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss (foreground) donates blood as Deputy Minister of Construction and Housing Alex Goldfarb waits his turn yesterday, in response to a severe blood shortage announced by Magen David Adom. Healthy people with any blood type are asked to donate during a special three-day national blood-collection campaign, which begins today. MDA branches in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and Haifa, and the national blood center at Tel Hashomer, will be open today and tomorrow between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. and from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Friday. For details call 177-022-5911. All donors receive a year's blood insurance for themselves and their immediate family. (Efrim Kishitok)

Tzur: Golan water vital, irreplaceable

AGRICULTURE Minister Ya'acov Tzur said yesterday that water sources on the Golan Heights were of "vital importance" to the future of the State.

Tzur told reporters during a visit to the north that Israel would have to ensure the continued uninterrupted flow of the water from the Golan into Lake Kinneret in any peace agreement with Syria.

"The water coming from the Golan to the Lake Kinneret catchment area is between 200 million and 300 million cubic meters [per year]," he said.

DAVID RUDGE

"This is a critical, vital and even fateful matter in terms of the future of the State. I have to say that I'm not aware of any replacement for this water."

Tzur spoke during a cornerstone-laying ceremony for a new NIS 60 million plant to collect and purify waste water in the Hula valley and pump it up to the surrounding hills of Upper Galilee.

The new unit being built by Mekorot is expected to take three years to complete, and is designed to boost the amount

of water available for irrigating fields and orchards on the hills up to 800 meters above the Hula Valley.

Kibbutzim and moshavim on the hills, from Manara to Dovev and Amirim, have suffered from a dire shortage of water for irrigation purposes, especially in drought years.

Tzur said the new plant, alongside existing facilities, would provide the water needed to develop agriculture on the hills of Upper Galilee and make more fresh water available for the expansion of communities.

Peres: No change in Israel's nuclear policy

DAVID RUDGE and news agencies

PRIME Minister Shimon Peres stressed yesterday that there was no change in Israel's nuclear policy, while Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said Egypt would only raise the nuclear issue after comprehensive peace was attained in the region.

Peres, speaking to high school students in Haifa, said Israel had not made any concessions on the nuclear issue. He also maintained that comments he had made last week on the matter had been blown out of proportion and caused unnecessary drama.

Peres said last Friday during a meeting with the Editors Committee that Israel was willing to "give up the atom" if a comprehensive peace was achieved in the Middle East.

Peres was asked about his remark during a question and answer session with eleventh and twelfth graders from various Haifa high schools.

"I want to say that we have not made any concessions on nuclear issues," said Peres in response to a question from one of the students.

"We have said, a thousand and one times, that if there will be a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, that will also include Iran, Iraq and Libya, then discussions can be entered into

on how to create a Middle East free of non-conventional weapons—chemical weapons, nuclear weapons and biological weapons," said Peres.

Mubarak, asked yesterday about the dispute with Israel over nuclear disarmament, said Egypt would only raise the issue after comprehensive peace was attained in the region.

"We will wait until a peace treaty is reached with our brothers in Syria and Lebanon, and the Palestinian cause takes its course... [then] no doubt will we talk about the nuclear option and that the region remains free of weapons of mass destruction," he said at a press conference with Jordan's King Hussein, after meeting him in Akaba.

Mubarak, asked later at a joint news conference when he thought Israel and Syria would sign a peace treaty, said: "During 1996, I hope from all my heart that we will arrive at it in 1996."

King Hussein told the news conference, which was broadcast by state television, that there was tangible progress in Israeli-Syrian peace talks.

"We always sought to have a comprehensive peace in this region... We hope, God willing, that we will reach this objective in a very short period," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Zucker: Army shouldn't censor criticism

The army of a democratic state should not censor articles which point out the dark side of the army's judicial system, Knesset Law Committee chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz) protested in a letter to Prime Minister Shimon Peres yesterday.

The letter referred to an interview by the IDF journal *Bamahane* with the chief IDF defense attorney, which Zucker said painted an "unencouraging" picture of soldiers' rights both as suspects and as prisoners. The IDF barred its publication.

Zucker said the interview also showed a need for a substantial change in military law regarding soldiers' rights. Evelyn Gordon

Israel-Bethlehem sting nets car thieves

Seven Israeli car thieves were detained in Bethlehem yesterday in a "unprecedented joint operation by Israel and Palestinian police," a police spokesman said. Ten stolen vehicles were found in the police operation, which involved the Judea District Intelligence Division and the new Palestinian police force in Bethlehem.

Also yesterday, Palestinian police in Jericho returned two stolen Israeli vehicles. Israeli police have reported a massive wave of car thefts in recent months, with the stolen vehicles being taken to the autonomous areas. Bill Hutman

High-tech firm may help save Ofakim

ECI Telecom yesterday announced it is willing to build a factory in Ofakim if it receives government aid, Israel Radio reported. Prime Minister's Office Director-General Zvi Alderoti yesterday led a delegation to Ofakim to study the town's economic situation in view of the threatened closure of the Omer textile plant. He and the directors-general of the Industry and Trade Ministry and the Employment Service met with Mayor Micha Herman and Omer workers. Alderoti told them that, in addition to immediate aid, Ofakim would receive a long-term solution to its economic plight that would include high-tech industries. Jerusalem Post Staff

Israel agrees to add five seats to PA Council

JON IMMANUEL

ISRAEL has agreed to add five seats to the Palestinian Council, from 83 to 88, the government coordinator's spokesman confirmed yesterday.

Together with Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat, who stands for election as president separately from the council but will be a member, that makes 89 seats.

Arafat made the request in a meeting with Prime Minister Shimon Peres at the Erez checkpoint two weeks ago. Peres transmitted his agreement through the government coordinator in the terri-

tories, Maj.-Gen. Oren Shahor.

This is the second time that Israel has agreed to increase the number of seats since signing the Oslo 2 Accords in October. Previously it had added one, from 82 to 83, to permit a member of the Nablus Samaritan community to sit in the elected council.

It was not clear yesterday whether the extra five members of the council would be elected like the other 83 or nominated by Arafat.

Israeli sources said that Arafat wanted to nominate the five, but sources close to the Palestinian Central Election Committee said that would be "unacceptable." If they are elected, decisions will have to be taken on the distribution of the new seats among the 16 electoral districts.

During the Oslo 2 talks, the

Palestinians first requested separate legislative and executive chambers with a total of 100 seats, and Israel started negotiations offering one chamber with 27 executive officials. Privately, Palestinian negotiators said they would be happy with 82 members, which was the number of West Bank and Gaza Palestinians who sat in legislative councils under Jordan and Egyptian rule before 1967.

At first Israel was concerned that a large council with legislative powers would be a symbol of sovereignty, but then decided that a large council would promote democratic debate and help ensure stability, and agreed to 82 plus Arafat without further debate.

Arafat has a right to appoint 20 percent of the cabinet ministers, but these would not have voting privileges in the council.

High Court petitioned to free Cytrin

HERB KEINON

JERUSALEM lawyer Naftali Wertzberger petitioned the High Court of Justice yesterday to order the IDF to rescind the administrative detention of Kiryat Arba resident Shmuel Cytrin.

Wertzberger's petition also asks the court to order the Prisons Service to ease the conditions of Cytrin's imprisonment. According to Wertzberger, Cytrin is being held in solitary confinement and—despite instructions by a military judge to the contrary—is not allowed to pray with a minyan.

Cytrin, 37, has begun a hunger strike in Sharon Prison at Tel Mond to protest his conditions. The Women in Green organization, which calls Cytrin a "Prisoner of Zion," is organizing a march on Sunday to focus attention on his case.

Cytrin, the father of five children, was arrested on December 4 and placed under three

months' administrative detention. Wertzberger said that neither he nor his client know why he is being held, and that all documents on the case are classified.

A military appeals court earlier this week shortened Cytrin's detention to two months. According to Wertzberger, military judge Eli Zicherman reduced the sentence, because he said OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Ilan Biran, who signed the detention order, did not take into consideration other forms of detention, such as house arrest.

Cytrin's mother, Marilyn, said her son's especially strict kashrut needs (he prefers *glatt* kosher food) have not been met in prison.

Wertzberger said that in the early 1970s, Cytrin was close to the late Kach leader Meir Ka-

hane, but has not had any run-ins with the law since 1979.

The lawyer said that administrative detainees are supposed to enjoy better conditions than ordinary prisoners; they are not to be housed with regular prisoners and are entitled to wear civilian clothes.

But since Cytrin is the only Jewish administrative detainee being held in jail—a number of others are under house arrest or have restrictions on their movements—he is under solitary confinement.

About two weeks ago, two leaders of Amnesty International met with Kiryat Arba activist David Ramati about the case. Ramati said his impression was that the organization was working on a report on administrative detention of settlers, and that the Cytrin case would figure prominently in the report.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

THE WEEKLY MEETING of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place today at 1:00 p.m. at the YMCA, King David Street. Dr. Fawzi Kemal will speak on "Israel's Arabs and the Media." A Happy New Year to All!

We deeply regret the untimely passing of our dear mother, grandmother, mother-in-law

LILY GAITELBAND

The funeral service will take place today, Wednesday, December 27, 1995, at 1:00 p.m., at the Kfar Nachman Cemetery, Ra'anana.

Mama/Boba - You will be sadly missed by all of us.

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EMMANUEL LEVINAS זצ"ל

Eminent philosopher, educator and man of vision. We extend our condolences to his family.

Our beloved

NITZA ETRA-DAGAN

has passed away.

The funeral will take place today, Wednesday, December 27, 1995 at 3 p.m. at Hayarkon Cemetery.

She is mourned by her mother, sons, sister and the entire family.

Please refrain from condolence visits.

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مكتبة الكنيست



Dr. Mark Klotz-Stein (left) assists Dr. Yaron Almagor as he prepares to introduce an artery support to the leg of the patient. (Brian Hendler)

New arterial support successfully implanted in man's heart

A "new generation" of coronary artery supports designed locally to be both flexible, for easy insertion, and firm, to prevent the vessel's collapse, was successfully implanted yesterday in the heart of a 48-year-old man at Jerusalem's Shaare Zedek Hospital.

JUDY SIEGEL

The NIR (new intra-vascular rigid) flex stent was developed by a group of scientists at the Medical company in Tel Aviv.

Dr. Yaron Almagor, who performed the implantation and was responsible for the clinical application, said the unique design of the tiny, stainless steel stent (coil) will be a boon to patients with arteries whose structural problem renders the use of conventional

Poraz, who was killed in the IDF attempt to rescue Nahshon Wachsmann from the hands of terrorists in October 1994.

The NIR stent was implanted in the man's heart in an hour-long operation. The patient previously underwent three unsuccessful angioplasties (balloon catheterizations). If the special stent were not available, the patient would have had to undergo open-heart surgery.

It was the first clinical use here of the NIR stent, which will be tested in international clinical trials coordinated by Shaare Zedek.

'Judges guilty of ignoring Basic Law'

EVELYN GORDON

MANY judges appear to ignore the implications of the Basic Law: Human Dignity and Freedom when considering whether to approve a remand, Knesset Law Committee chairman Dedi Zucker (Meretz) charged yesterday.

Zucker said he would ask Supreme Court President Aharon Barak to arrange courses for judges on this matter, to educate them into understanding that remands are a severe infringement on a person's basic rights, and should therefore be approved only in exceptional cases.

"It seems that some of the judges have not yet internalized the criteria and norms set down by the Basic Law, which are meant, among other things, to defend the prisoner's rights and reduce the number of arrests," he said.

Zucker made the statement in the context of a committee discussion on a government bill to tighten the restrictions on arrests.

Most people satisfied by national health law

JUDY SIEGEL

FIFTY-NINE percent of the public are satisfied or very satisfied with the year-old National Health Insurance Law, according to a survey by the IDC-Brookdale Institute in Jerusalem. Nearly a quarter of the 1,400 adults in the representative sample were not so satisfied or unsatisfied with the law, while 17 percent had no opinion.

Health Minister Ephraim Sneh presented the results of the survey yesterday to the National Health Council, which met for the third time this year. Sneh said that health does not receive its proper place in the country's list of priorities.

The minister said he plans to push for a number of changes in the law after its year of running in.

These include an updating of the basket of health services according to population growth, the aging of the population, and technological improvements.

Their lack caused a shortfall of NIS 700 million in 1995.

The minister also wants the Treasury to make up the shortfall

between health-tax collections and the costs of health services on a regular basis, and not at the end of the year or when the finance minister feels like it.

The number of members in each health fund should be updated quarterly instead of every half year, Sneh said. Medical institutions will be barred from charging patients for services that must be provided at the expense of their insurer.

Health funds will be barred from controlling subsidiaries that do not deal with health services.

Sneh will also ask the Knesset for an amendment allowing health funds to provide patients with special drugs not available in the basket of health services.

The minister also wants to restore the previous arrangement whereby hospitals that deliver babies get paid directly by the National Insurance Institute, instead of the current system in which the health funds get the NII money and transfer it (usually late) to the hospital.

500 extra police to guard Jerusalem's holy places

LIAT COLLINS

FIVE-hundred extra policemen whose primary task will be to protect holy sites will be permanently stationed in Jerusalem, Minister of Internal Security Moshe Shahal said in the Knesset plenum yesterday.

Shahal was answering several motions to the agenda by opposition parties during which National Religious Party leader Zvulun Hammer claimed the Palestinians are tightening their hold on Jerusalem.

Shahal also said intelligence and patrol units would be reinforced, and a police station would open in eastern Jerusalem.

"I was very surprised to discover [yesterday that] only Border Police operate in eastern Jerusalem and not blue-uniformed police, as if we were talking about a

border settlement. Police presence is a clear sign of rule and control in the field, and therefore we have rented a special building in a central road in eastern Jerusalem and will open a police station there and another one after that.

"Because of the lack of police presence, the local residents are turning to all sorts of elements in the area, including [Palestinian Preventive Security Service head Col.] Jibril Rajoub's men, to protect them from criminals. These private and independent activities are not acceptable," Shahal said.

Noting the sensitivity and complexity of any discussion involving Jerusalem, Shahal nonetheless clarified his stand: "We will

not divide, split or fence in the city."

"Undoubtedly the Palestinians, led by Faisal Husseini, are trying to create facts on the ground and are violating the signed agreements, but we won't let them. Only [yesterday] five more injunctions were issued against events they had organized. We have arrested, are arresting and will arrest without hesitation Jibril Rajoub's agents acting in the city. Nothing contravening the agreement will take place," he said.

Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eliezer said he intended development work on the Har Homa neighborhood, bordering Bethlehem, to begin in three weeks. He was answering a motion by MK Emanuel Zissman (Labor).

Bill on surrogate motherhood bogged down in committee

THE bill to permit surrogate mother arrangements got bogged down in the Knesset's Labor and Social Affairs Committee yesterday - even though an existing law barring such arrangements will expire on Monday. The dispute was whether single or married relatives of the commissioning parents should be allowed to bear the baby, and if a sperm donation should be permitted.

Health Minister Ephraim Sneh opposed the change, proposed by religious groups, that a surrogacy arrangement be allowed only if the commissioning father supplied sperm to produce the embryo. It was even proposed that the sperm and ovum bryo.

Must come only from the commissioning parents. In the government version of the bill, either the sperm or the ovum must come from one of the commissioning parents.

These new proposals, Sneh said, "would prevent surrogacy in all cases when the husband is sterile, and would be a divergence from the status quo. The surrogacy bill is a thin line that balances between opposing views, and we won't agree to turn it into a political dispute that would lead to the import of women to serve as 'rented wombs.'"

The ministry's version of the bill was approved a few weeks ago by the the Ministerial Committee on Legislation and subsequently passed by the Knesset.

The Labor and Social Affairs committee, chaired by MK Yossi Katz, approved the part of the bill that sets out the contractual and technical arrangements.

Would-be commissioning parents argue that setting additional restrictions would reduce the number of potential surrogates to a handful and make a mockery of the law.

Judy Siegel

Court: Rabbinate can refuse to officiate at non-kosher halls

EVELYN GORDON

THE High Court of Justice ruled yesterday that the Chief Rabbinate has the right to refuse to perform weddings in a non-kosher hall, while sharply criticizing the petitioners' lack of consideration for Orthodox rabbis' religious beliefs.

The couple's insistence on their 'right' to have a rabbi in Israel perform their wedding ceremony... in a place without a kosher certificate - when it is clear that this demand will cause difficulties for him and perhaps even cause him to be despised in others' eyes - borders, in my opinion, on a large measure of rudeness and lack of consideration."

Justice Theodore Orr wrote in the verdict. "In a pluralistic society such as ours, mutual tolerance is necessary... A little understanding for the other person, a little politeness and consideration, would blunt many arguments and differences of opinion."

The court was ruling on a petition by Sharon Dolev and Tlan Riga, who wanted to marry in a Rehovot restaurant which lacks a kosher certificate from the rabbinates, but is certified by a non-Orthodox group called the Va'ad L'Shomrei Masoret. The petitioners argued that since there is no halachic ban on performing weddings in non-kosher halls, there is no justification for the rabbinates' refusal.

Furthermore, they said, the rabbinates' refusal infringes on their basic right of freedom of religion - or, in this case, freedom from religion.

However, justices Orr, Shlomo Levine and Zvi Tal said that even if the petitioners are correct that weddings in non-kosher halls are halachically permissible - a claim which the rabbinates disputed - the rabbinates are responsible by law for performing marriages, and this responsibility includes the right to determine where the

marriage is held.

While the couple's desires should certainly be taken into account, the justices said, the rabbinates are under no obligation to hold the ceremony in a place where the rabbi himself, for reasons of conscience, would be uncomfortable officiating.

In this case, the justices noted, the petitioners' right to freedom of religion conflicts with the rabbi's right to the same, since their demand would force him to do something which conflicts with his religious beliefs. And the petitioners, they noted, have another option: They could have the ceremony in a place acceptable to the rabbi and then hold the reception somewhere else.

Haim Shapiro adds:

Commenting on the High Court decision, Rabbi Uri Regav, director of the Reform Movement's Israel Religious Action Center, said that the ruling

further legitimized the control which the Chief Rabbinate has not only over actual marriage ceremonies in Israel, but over the venue as well.

The only way to rectify the situation, he said, was to remove the monopoly from the hands of the rabbinate.

Tuvia Moshovitz, head of the Va'ad Shomrei Masoret, said that the High Court decision had not changed the actual situation, since rabbis performing marriages in the past have consistently refused to come to places with his group's kosher certificate. However, Moshovitz said, the court had not taken into account the ruling by Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, which allowed marriages in non-kosher premises.

Moshovitz added that in keeping with this decision, the rabbinates could now easily argue that rabbis should not perform marriages in places where women were immodestly dressed or where there was mixed dancing.

'Policeman forced to flee Russia'

BILL HUTMAN

A police liaison officer and his family were reportedly forced to flee Russia and return to Israel after receiving death threats from the Russian mafia.

Police sources said the officer, deputy commander Aharon Tal, has since gone back to his post in Moscow. The sources, as well as the police spokesman, declined to comment further on the case. According to a report in Yediot Aharonot, the threats began after

police here opened an investigation into allegations by a Russian banker that he was cheated out of \$60,000 by a member of the Russian mafia in this country.

The banker did not know he was dealing with a Russian mafia member when he employed him to set up a branch of his bank in Cyprus, according to Yediot. Tal, his wife and his daughter

received death threats from the Russian mafia, and Tal was warned by the mafia not to try to have their man in Israel arrested.

The Tals left Moscow and returned to Israel for several weeks.

They eventually returned to Moscow, after the banker was slain by the Russian mafia.

Police believed that with the

banker's murder there was no longer a threat to the Tal family, according to the report. Tal was posted in Moscow about a year ago, as part of an attempted crackdown here on Russian mafia activities.

Earlier this week, Internal Security Minister Moshe Shahal warned of the growing danger of Russia mafia infiltration in both the public and private sectors here.

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NATO to Serbs: No delay on peace deal

NATO's commander in Bosnia turned down a Serb request yesterday to postpone immediately a return of Sarajevo's Serb suburbs to Moslem-led government control, but said he would look closely at the issue.

Bosnian Serb leaders told Admiral Leighton Smith that a delay in implementing some parts of the Dayton peace agreement was vital to prevent thousands in Serb-held suburbs from fleeing in mass panic.

The deal gives the government control, within three months of the December 14 Paris signing, of suburbs that separatist Serbs used as bases to bombard and besiege the Bosnian capital for more than three-and-a-half years of war.

Fearing revenge attacks and rule by their enemies, Serb residents have threatened to flee, burning their homes.

Smith traveled to the mountaintop stronghold of Pale for the first time to meet a gathering of separatist Serb leaders, including Momcilo Krajisnik, the powerful Speaker of the Serb assembly.

He did not encounter Bosnian Serb "President" Radovan Karadzic or army chief General Ratko Mladic, both indicted war criminals liable to arrest by Smith's forces.

"President Krajisnik asked me if I would

SEAN MAGUIRE
PALE, Bosnia

be willing to announce today an implementation extension and I told him that I was not in a position today to make such an extension," Smith told reporters.

But the commander of the heavily-armed NATO peace force said he would be reviewing the issue day by day and held open a possibility of deferring the handover of suburbs to government control.

The Bosnian Serb foreign minister Alexa Buba said he had asked Smith to use his authority to allow Serb forces to stay around the city until September, seven months after they should withdraw, a request unlikely to impress the Bosnian government.

"I told President Krajisnik we will take into account all aspects of the (peace) agreement and we would hopefully render a decision acceptable to all. Other than that no guarantees were made," said Smith.

Smith described his meeting as cordial and expressed his appreciation for cooperation the Bosnian Serbs have shown so far with the NATO peace implementation force he commands.

Krajisnik said the Bosnian Serbs were

willing to implement the peace accords negotiated in Dayton, Ohio, in November but he asked that "some solution" be found for the Serbs around Sarajevo.

"We hope the situation will be clearer soon and we will find a solution to the Sarajevo problem and remove one of the obstacles to the agreement," he said.

He refused to specify what solution there might be that would not contradict the Dayton accords, which peace mediators have said are not renegotiable, and did not answer when asked if a delay was being sought simply to prevent implementation.

"Serbs are not going to accept Moslem government at present because there is too much fear," said Krajisnik, "the Dayton agreement on Sarajevo is not a just solution...a great number of people want to leave."

Krajisnik blamed "Moslem propaganda" for an atmosphere of fear and confusion in the Serb-held suburbs and hinted at chaos endangering the peace process unless a delay was granted.

"There is a danger of gestures that can't be controlled, there may be many types of panic," said Krajisnik. "The Dayton accord can't be altered but peace can't be put at stake. We must find a solution that achieves a lasting peace."

(Reuters)



Police and rescue workers stand next to the body of an Edendale township resident yesterday after it was pulled out of the floodwaters in KwaZulu-Natal. (Reuters)

Secular Turkish parties to unite against Islamic foe

ANKARA (Reuters) - Turkey's Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and her main conservative rival agreed yesterday to work for a coalition to keep the Islamist Welfare Party from power after it won the weekend election.

"My hopes have been raised for the realization of a strong government based on compromise," Motherland Party (ANAP) leader Mesut Yilmaz told a news conference after meeting Ciller.

He said the left-wing Demo-

cratic Left Party had also earlier agreed to help sideline the Islamist Welfare Party, which narrowly won general elections at the weekend but failed to get enough seats to govern on its own.

ANAP and Ciller's True Path Party (DYP) came in neck-and-neck just behind Welfare at Sunday's vote.

"I have said we would welcome a coalition with ANAP and I repeat that," Ciller said. "Our aim is to go towards a wide-based government," she said at the

joint news conference.

Ciller said the bid also had the support of her former social democrat coalition partner - the fifth and last party to make it into parliament in Sunday's vote.

Welfare's win with 21.32 percent of the vote was the first general poll victory by an Islamist party in Turkey's 72 years as a secular republic and sparked wide calls for a DYP-ANAP alliance - long desired by the business world.

Longstanding animosity be-

tween Ciller and Yilmaz may still hinder the talks. A similar alliance came close after Ciller's right-left coalition collapsed in September, but the talks broke down in acrimony. The elections were then called 10 months before they were due.

DYP and ANAP are worth 40 percent of the vote, but their combined 267 seats fall short of a majority in the 550-seat parliament. They will need help from at least one of the two leftist parties.

Yeltsin turns to foreign policy after election

MOSCOW (Reuters) - President Boris Yeltsin moved yesterday to assert his personal control over foreign policy while triumphant Communists continued to revel in their parliamentary election victory.

Yeltsin, recovering from heart problems in a sanatorium, set up a new Council on Foreign Policy which will be responsible directly to him, his press service said.

The Council was created "to enhance the effectiveness of Russia's foreign policy and to implement the president's powers in defining the guidelines of the foreign policy."

Yeltsin and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin were due to discuss later yesterday the results of last week's parliamentary election, the political situation in the country and personnel issues, Interfax news agency said.

In the first resignation from the cabinet since the election, Yeltsin's once-close associate Sergei Shakhrai stepped down as deputy premier to take up a seat in the new State Duma lower house.

Shakhrai, who helped Yeltsin dismantle the former Soviet Union by forming the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 1991, won a seat in an individual constituency in his native Rostov-on-Don region in southern Russia.

(Continued from Page 1)

Mordechai was eagerly courted by a number of parties, especially Labor, but also by David Levy for his soon-to-be-born party. Throughout months of energetic rumor-mongering by the media, Mordechai maintained a strict silence.

Earlier in the day, Shamir announced he would not seek another term in the Knesset. Noting that he is 80, he said, "The time has come to step down."

Shamir had planned to resign after losing the premiership in 1992, but reconsidered. He promised last night that he would "do my utmost during the campaign to help the Likud back to power. This government is bad for Israel and must be replaced."

A similar promise to help the Likud came from Nissim, who served as justice minister in the Likud government and for a time as minister of finance in the national unity government.

Nissim sent a letter to Likud chairman Binyamin Netanyahu informing him he would not be in the running this time around. He reminded Netanyahu of the objections "I had long sounded to the primary system. This system has now overrun the entire political arena and there is no one to stop or curb it."

Nissim had complained that to contest the primaries, candidates must have considerable funds. He foresaw that the primaries would eventually wipe the remnants of the Liberal contingent from the Likud Knesset slate.

"The dangers of corruption and fawning to target sectors bothers me," he wrote. "Fund raising creates a real problem of a

119 killed, many missing in South African floods

AT least 119 people were killed and many more missing in floods caused by heavy rains in South Africa's KwaZulu-Natal province, police said yesterday.

Police divers, rescue teams, residents and helicopters were pulling out bodies from the Umsunduzi River and its tributary the Slangspruit which burst their banks on Monday night.

Police spokesman Henry Budrum said 119 bodies had been recovered so far.

"We are expecting to find many more overnight and tomorrow," he told Reuters.

The victims all lived in Imbali next to the Edendale black township outside Pietermaritzburg.

Police and residents said the water level had dropped and the townships were no longer in danger unless heavy rains poured down again.

Distracted residents scoured the river banks searching for relatives while a police helicopter lifted body-bags carrying victims. They waded through mud and bushes, many crying in anguish after discovering their dead relatives.

Mortuary workers said the majority of those who died appeared

CRAIG DOONAN
EDENDALE, South Africa

to have been in their late teens. "People have been coming to look for up to 10 people per family," one mortuary worker said.

Imbali resident Enock Nhlangule said he had lost nine relatives in the floods.

"So far we have recovered four bodies. But we are still missing five relatives, including my three-week old sister."

"I was lucky because I went to visit friends when the heavy rains came. When I returned I found everyone and everything inside the house had been washed away," he said.

Pendukile Masikane, 50 said she had lost her husband and a daughter.

"The water came inside and washed everything away including my husband and my child. I managed to make it to safety, but I have lost everything, even my house was swept away," she said.

Provincial parliamentarian Sifiso Nkabinde said the regional government has declared Imbali township a disaster area.

"We will do all we can to assist the victims. We will be appealing

to the central government to provide funds for assistance," he said.

Russel Ndlovu, who has lived in the area for 30 years, said the floods were the worst experienced in his lifetime.

"I have been here for 30 years and I have never seen anything like this. There are still bodies lying in the bushes near the river. There are plenty of them."

Many shacks were swept away. Budrum said residents were being assisted to build makeshift homes.

"Everything possible is being done to help the survivors of the floods. Tents are being provided and the community is also helping," he said.

For many years Edendale and Imbali was the scene of bitter fighting between supporters of President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) and Chief Mangosuthu Buthe's Inkatha Freedom Party.

Political violence has eased since elections in April last year ended white-minority rule. But on Christmas Day at least 14 people were killed in a mass raid by Inkatha warriors on ANC supporters in the Shobashobane settlement.

N. Korea returns fishermen seized seven months ago

FIVE South Korean fishermen, caught in a political tug-of-war for nearly seven months, made an emotional return home yesterday after being freed by North Korea.

The release appeared to be a pragmatic conciliatory gesture by the impoverished North to improve relations. It could set the stage for the communist country to seek more rice aid from the capitalist South.

Dressed in suits and carrying

identical dark-gray suitcases, the men looked healthy as they crossed the Military Demarcation Line that separates the bitter rivals at 4 p.m. after shaking hands with North Korean military officials and waving farewell.

"Thank you; we cannot forget your hospitality," one shouted.

The cremated remains of three crewmen were handed over to South Korean Red Cross representatives who wore white

face masks.

After quick medical checks, the survivors were reunited with weeping relatives at a South Korean government building outside the border village of Panmunjom.

"I never thought I would get back home alive," said a tearful Park Jae-yol, one of the fishermen.

The men said they were interrogated but not mistreated during their stay.

PERES

(Continued from Page 1)
Savir said. "I want to ascertain that peace, as we in Israel define it, is also a Syrian self-interest, while respecting the interests and needs of the two sides."

The two sides will not attempt to conclude a declaration of principles during the next several days, he said. "The discussion is conceptual, on defining a goal," for the talks, he said.

Syrian negotiators left for the US yesterday optimistic that the new round of talks will break the deadlock in negotiations, a senior Syrian official said.

"We hope that this round will be better than the previous ones," he said. "There is a new atmosphere and we have big hopes. We look forward to progress."

He said Syria is ready to discuss all points with an open mind in the meetings.

"Syria is ready to discuss any ideas from the Israelis if these do not harm sovereignty, dignity, and independence, and if these ideas will lead to full withdrawal from our occupied lands," he said.

"Syria is still ready to make full peace with Israel in return for full withdrawal from the Golan," he added.

The Syrian delegation consists of Walid Mualem, Syria's ambassador to Washington, and Michael Wahbi, director of Foreign Minister Farouk Shara's office.

In addition to Savir, the Israeli team consists of Ambassador to the US Itamar Rabinovich and Foreign Ministry legal adviser Yoel Singer.

MORDECHAI

conflict of interests, and for us the move from the central election system - which is not remembered fondly - to the primary election system is a move out of the frying pan and into the fire. It could be that I live in an old-fashioned world, but I never even remotely considered collecting money from prominent people and businessmen to finance my election to any position, and any time donations were offered to me for this purpose, I completely rejected them."

The rampant speculation in recent days about a surprise last-minute return to the party by MKs David Levy and David Magen was not borne out by last night's deadline. "All the talk of coming back was unfounded," said Magen.

But yesterday's deadline did bring a few surprises. Among them was the entry into the Likud fray of former Agudat Yisrael MK Eliezer Mizrahi. While the Likud had moderately religious candidates, such as Nissim, it never had anyone as hard as Mizrahi.

Mizrahi expressed the hope last night that, "The fact that I am here will not affect my chances. My credo and that of the Likud are not all that different."

Mizrahi was one of two Aguda MKs - the other being Avraham Verdiger - who in 1990 foiled the "stinking maneuver" whereby Labor sought to bring down the national unity government. Mizrahi and Verdiger refused to go along with the deal between Aguda and Labor despite great pressure.

Among other familiar faces in the race will be former MK and former ambassador to Washington MK Yoash Tziddon, Atid MK Esther Salmovitz (formerly of Tsomet and then Y'ud) and former Tehiya MK Geula Cohen. Cohen's forms were handed in by her son, MK Tzahi Hanegbi, also very much in the running.

One slot is reserved for new immigrant candidates and one for young activists. Among those seeking the immigrant vote will be Soviet aliyah activist Yuli Kosharovsky.

Liat Collins contributed to this report.

RAMALLAH

(Continued from Page 1)

The withdrawal from Ramallah will be the final IDF move out of populated Palestinian areas until the partial withdrawal from Hebron in late March.

Meanwhile, at yesterday's session of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, IDF Chief of Staff Lt-Gen. Amnon Lipkin Shahak said "great difficulties" are likely to be encountered "if

we try to arrest suspects in Judea and Samaria. Detentions are made according to our decisions and orders without any liaison with the Palestinian Authority. We are monitoring the agreements between Hamas and the P.A. At this stage, since the contacts began, there has been a hiatus on attacks."

Jon Immanuel and Liat Collins contributed to this report.

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Turkey's moderates taught a lesson

BARRY RUBIN
ANALYSIS

ON the surface, the success of radical Islamic candidates in Turkey's parliamentary elections seems shocking. But that country's stability and secularism will not be harmed if the moderates learn their lesson.

After all, the "fundamentalist" Welfare Party really came in last. Only quarrels among its rivals let it come in first.

The Welfare Party received slightly over 21 percent of the vote — up 2% from 1994 — while two centrist parties split almost 39%, and two rival social democratic parties divided 25%. Since her True Path Party came in second, prime minister Tansu Ciller resigned and will form a caretaker government.

The lineup in the new session of the 550-member parliament will see 158 Welfare Party members. For the conservatives, Ciller's True Path and the competing Motherland parties will have 135 and 132 seats respectively.

On the left, the Democratic Left will have 75 and the Republican People's Party will have 50 seats.

Thus, the Islamic forces can achieve a majority only if one of the other conservative groupings agrees to be its junior partner. This is extremely unlikely.

One reason this will probably not happen is the figure of Turkey's tough president, Suleiman Demirel.

Although the presidency is theoretically apolitical, he was the founder of the True Path party and continues to be its patron. Demirel will do everything possible to force together a coalition that can exclude the Islamic forces from power.

Demirel's first decision is whom to ask to try to assemble a majority coalition in parliament. As in Israel, the president customarily turns to the leader of the largest single party, but he does not have to do so. If this first candidate fails, a second leader is given this opportunity.

While the Welfare Party has some impressive young pragmatic leaders — along with some extremist demagogues — the head of the party is Necmettin Erbakan. The party's founder and leader during its many years as a virtual sect, Erbakan is neither charismatic nor respected by his political counterparts.

In no way is Turkey either about to become an Islamic fundamentalist state nor abandon its orientation to Europe, a policy implanted by the still-revered Kemal Ataturk, the republic's founder, over 70 years ago.

Despite social dislocations, the country's rapid, successful modernization is moving it ever closer to the West.

Ironically, the election's most



Young supporters of the pro-Islamic Welfare Party make a victory sign after a rally in Ankara on Saturday. At their right, a poster shows the Welfare Party's local candidates. (AP)

immediate harm may be to discourage Europe from accepting Turkey.

A treaty to let Turkey join the European Union's customs union — many years in the works — may be jeopardized by a European perception associating Turkey with extremist Middle Eastern doctrines.

Significantly, Turkey's primary complaint against the West — Bosnia — is a symbol for them of Europe rejecting a people who, like the Turks, want to be part of it.

FOREIGN policy issues played little part in the election and, if anything, damaged the Welfare Party's appeal.

The Iranian model is so unappealing that Turkish Islamists try to dissociate themselves from Tehran. Turkish suspicion of Islamic law was intensified last summer by Saudi Arabia's beheading of Turkish truck-drivers accused of smuggling an aphrodisiac drug into that country.

While contributing to the country's problems, the very costly war against Kurdish radicals in southeastern Turkey also

had little effect on the balloting. Many Kurds are completely assimilated and the great majority of Turks are united in opposition to any concessions to the rebels, who claim 20% of the country and are actively engaged in terrorism.

So great is the power of both Turkish nationalism and the allure of Europe, that even the Welfare Party tries to accommodate them. Its foreign policy is to argue — rather improbably — that the Islamic world is waiting for Turkey to lead it.

At the same time, the party's more sophisticated leaders argue that there is no contradiction between being a good Moslem and a thoroughly modern individual.

What, then, is the basis for the Welfare Party's rise? One factor is discontent in parts of the country being left behind by development. Another is the disorientation of recent migrants from villages to cities, whose huge numbers have made Istanbul possibly the world's largest city.

Like their counterparts in Arab countries, the Welfare Party's activists engage in a lot of

grassroots organizing and welfare work to build a base of support.

Another problem is a broad popular dissatisfaction with a political establishment seemingly indifferent to the problems of average people and roused to enthusiasm only by its internal quarrels.

High inflation — almost 100 percent a year — is an especially devastating problem, undercutting the ability of almost everyone to make a living.

Yet even with all these factors, the Welfare Party barely achieved one vote in five.

An additional point constraining the Islamic politicians is the army's deep-seated opposition to them. Though Turks don't like to speculate on this, the armed forces would sooner stage a coup than see an Islamic regime in Ankara.

Periodically, officers who flirt with Islamic ideology are purged. During the 1970s, a combination of governmental paralysis and endless factional bickering led to an upsurge in violence from extreme leftist and rightist groups.

Finally, the army stepped in —

as it had on two previous occasions — to take over and gradually return the country to democratic rule. The current crisis will almost certainly be settled more easily, in part due to the army's role as a deterrent.

The relationship between Turkey and Israel has never been closer than it is today.

An Islamic radical takeover in Ankara would destroy these ties; even the specter of a growing Islamic party might intimidate Turkish politicians into appeasement of the Welfare Party and its voters. Distancing itself from Israel could be an attractive option for them.

Yet the likely response of the Turkish leadership will be the exact opposite approach: to defy the Islamic radicals and undercut them and their allies abroad by continuing and intensifying the links between the two countries.

Barry Rubin, a senior fellow at Bar-Ilan University BESA Center, is author of *Assimilation and Its Discontents: Revolution Until Victory: The Politics and History of the PLO, and Istanbul Intrigues*.

Why the Cairo talks failed

PINHAS INBARI

THE failure of last week's Hamas-Palestinian Authority negotiations in Cairo did not come as a surprise. Neither the PA nor Hamas are mature enough to agree on how to regulate their reciprocal relations.

The PA, in Cairo, offered to allow Hamas to participate in next month's election in return for Hamas abandoning military activity and becoming a political party. Moreover, to realize the goal of "national unity," the PA offered Hamas the chance to compose agreed joint lists with Fatah and other parties.

But this proposal came before its time. Hamas is still a very "Jihadist" movement. It cannot renounce the jihad because this would imply acceptance of the Oslo accords, the denial of which is the common denominator of all Hamas factions. Furthermore, Hamas cannot rely on "PLO democracy." PA Chairman Yasser Arafat has not allowed his own Fatah movement to organize into a political party, so for Hamas leaders, serious questions remain as to whether he would permit a Hamas party to operate.

A joint list with Fatah is also less than what Arafat has previously offered Hamas. Before the Oslo accords, Hamas accepted an Arafat offer to join the PLO, on condition it would receive 40 percent of all the positions within it. Hamas has not retreated from this demand, which cannot be satisfied by a joint election list with Fatah.

If these obstacles were not enough, Hamas also cannot accept the PA's Cairo proposal because it does not include a guarantee that once Hamas has laid down its arms, the PA will not shut it down. Hamas has demanded a Parties Law, a demand Arafat rejected.

Arafat's reluctance to confirm a Parties Law casts a shadow on his intentions, not only regarding Hamas. This problem has already arisen in his relations with the local Fatah leadership in the

West Bank which, like Hamas, wanted constitutional safeguards for political parties. Arafat turned them down, saying "the revolution continues." The nature of this revolution was outlined in his address to the crowds in Nabulus, with his promise to liberate Jerusalem.

Hamas leaders no doubt asked themselves if Arafat has still not totally closed the door on military action, why should they? His speech in Nabulus gave no sign that he has decided to stick solely to political activity.

Of course, Arafat's failure to clarify his aspiration to create a democratic Palestine is not the only reason behind the unsuccessful PA-Hamas talks. Hamas, as a movement, could not make a unanimous decision because of the conflicting interests of the leadership inside and outside the territories.

Sheikh Yassin's people in Gaza are no doubt the most interested in an agreement with the PA because they have a local interest in coexistence with the PA. The outside leadership, however, has its own interests: maintaining good relations with the radical regimes in Tehran, Damascus and Khartoum. As long as Arafat is the closest ally to moderate Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, whom they regard as an enemy, the outside leadership may suspect that PA-Hamas negotiations are a political trap aimed at alienating them from their natural allies in the radical states and promoting moderate local leadership in the territories at their expense.

So why did the talks take place at all? Mainly to prevent a Palestinian civil war. Similar meetings have taken place in the past in which relations between the two sides were not settled, but clashes were avoided, which is of vital interest to both parties.

The PA and the Hamas will probably continue to meet, but for Israel, these meetings will not reduce the danger of future Hamas terrorism.

IN BRIEF

THE CIA has publicly accused Iran of expanding its chemical and biological weapons capabilities, and provided an intriguing glimpse into US government efforts to enlist the cooperation of countries such as China to interdict shipments of precursor chemicals to Iran.

In testimony on November 1 before the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, the director of the CIA's Nonproliferation Center, Dr. Gordon Ochler, sketched out the Iranian expansion efforts.

"Even after signing the Chemical Weapons Convention in January 1993, Tehran continues to upgrade and expand its chemical weapons production infrastructure and chemical munitions arsenal," he said. "Iran is spending large sums of money on long-term capital improvements to its chemical weapons program as part of this expansion."

(The Iran Brief, US)

The Hizbullah has struck a deal with Saudi opposition leaders to establish two military training camps for Saudi opposition fighters in the Bekaa Valley.

Negotiations began on August 2 when Abdul Wahab Mohammad Khairi, of Damman, and Ali Ahmad Jihadi, of Al Jubail, arrived in Beirut and opened a series of meetings with Hizbullah leaders, intelligence sources said.

Khairi and Jihadi held several meetings in August with Hassan Nasrallah, Hizbullah secretary-general, and Wafiq Safa, the head of the Hizbullah security apparatus for the southern suburbs. They also met with Mohammad Mazboub, another Hizbullah military leader.

Following these meetings, Hizbullah agreed to establish two military training camps for the Saudis, one near the northern Bekaa Valley town of Hermel and one in the village of Blida. Each camp, which Hizbullah agreed to finance, was large enough to accommodate 48 people for training sessions on explosives, intelligence work and assassination. One of Hizbullah's specialties is training in how to build car bombs.

(The Iran Brief, US)

Turkish firebrand dreams of Islamic world order

ALISTAIR BELL
ANKARA

SECLAR Turkey's veteran Islamist leader Necmettin Erbakan dreams of heading a global Moslem order.

"From now on Turkey's view of the world and the world's view of Turkey has changed," Erbakan said as his Welfare Party (RP) emerged in first place at the polls on Sunday.

Erbakan, RP's firebrand leader, landed as a "holy warrior" after his victory, immediately set out plans for reassessing ties with the West and demanded President Suleyman Demirel appoint him prime minister so he could put them into practice.

"Welfare will be at the head of government," he told private ATV television. "The people want Welfare."

At an earlier election rally, he spoke of his plans to set up "an Islamic United Nations, an Islamic NATO and an Islamic ver-

sion of the EU. We will create an Islamic currency."

Erbakan, a man of grand, sweeping ideas that are often short on detail, belies his training as a mechanical engineer.

Impressed with the young Erbakan's precision, staid professors at Istanbul University let him teach classes in motor machinery straight after graduating at 22.

He later spent two years conducting research in a West German university and factories in the Ruhr during the postwar reconstruction boom before returning to Turkey.

His time abroad did not distract him from his obligations as a Moslem or impress him with the ways of the West.

"The West learned everything it knows from the Moslems," he said in a newspaper interview last year.

Welfare opposes Turkey's 43-year-old membership of NATO. It is also against a recent customs union between Ankara and the European Union which Erbakan

sees as part of a Western plot to hold the Moslem world under its economic domination.

Erbakan has slammed the PLO's peace deal with Israel.

"I promise I will work for a just order, to liberate Bosnia, Azerbaijan, Chechnya and Jerusalem," read an oath he and thousands of followers recited at a historical Istanbul mosque at the start of his election campaign.

Calmer heads in the party often have a hard time undoing the damage done by Erbakan's wild rhetoric.

The Welfare economic manifesto, written by Erbakan, promises to scrap interest rates and do away with "world imperialism and Zionism as well as Israel and a handful of champagne-drinking collaborators in the holding companies that feed it."

But RP officials say the party would not drastically interfere with Turkey's economic structure. And it is doubtful if Welfare will have enough seats in parliament to enable its leader to em-



Necmettin Erbakan: Landed as a 'holy warrior.' (AP)

bark on his ambitious foreign policy.

He did not push a radical agenda when he served as deputy prime minister in two coalition governments in the 1970s. All the same, former prime minister Bu-

lent Ecevit distrusted Erbakan so much in 1974 that he refused to leave him the powers of premier-ship when he went on foreign trips.

Erbakan was born in the northern town of Sinop in 1926, one of six children of a father who had served as a traveling Islamic judge (kadi) in the crumbling Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the century.

Erbakan is married with three children.

Turkish caricaturists often lampoon him as a skull-capped Islamic "Hoca" (teacher), twirling prayer beads. But the white-haired Erbakan dresses in a shirt and tie, as do many Islamists in 99 percent Moslem but secular Turkey.

He entered politics as an independent Islamist MP for the conservative central town of Konya in 1969, accusing then prime minister Suleyman Demirel of removing him as head of a prestigious business group for his beliefs. (Reuters)

Oman trying to revive frankincense's smell of success

ANWAR FARUQI
MUSCAT

THE frankincense that the New Testament says the wise men gave to baby Jesus is still produced in this ancient land, where the government is trying to revive trade in a fragrance once worth more than gold.

Today, frankincense has lost most of its mystique and much of its value. Sold over the counter in plastic bags or cheap cardboard boxes, it goes for less than \$5 for 100 grams throughout the Gulf.

"Unfortunately, in the West frankincense is unknown except in churches where it is still burned for its fragrance," said Ahmed Shariff Bakry, export director at Oman's state-owned Public Authority for Marketing Agricultural Produce.

"We are trying to recover the

tradition." As part of the campaign, Oman is exporting frankincense in Christmas gift packs to Europe in order "to restore its historical religious connotation."

Frankincense has been made at the southern end of the Arabian Peninsula and exported for more than 3,000 years, but unless the trade is revived, its manufacture is in danger of dying out, Bakry said.

Made from the sap of boswellia trees that grow almost exclusively in southern Oman and neighboring Yemen, the fragrance was highly prized long before the trio of wise men took gold, frankincense and myrrh to the infant Jesus.

In 1500 BCE, frescoes depicting an expedition sent by Egypt-

ian Queen Hatshepsut showed frankincense as part of the rich cargo of gifts.

The Queen of Sheba presented King Solomon with frankincense, and its fragrant, cosmetic and medicinal qualities are also cited in Jewish and Moslem texts.

The production process has changed little over the centuries. Farmers make an incision in the boswellia tree in the spring and wait for the sap to ooze out over a period of weeks. The solidified gum that is then scraped off is frankincense.

"Few villagers are interested in doing the work. They are more interested in finding jobs in the

cities," said Bakry.

These days the harvest in Oman, always the source of the best quality frankincense, reaches just over 20 tons per year.

At the height of the trade in the second century, nearly 3,000 tons were transported each year from southern Arabia to the temples and palaces of Greece, Rome, Babylon and Persia.

Writing in the first century, the Roman historian Pliny claimed frankincense had made the people of southern Arabia the richest in the world.

Frankincense was once commonly used in perfumes, but today Western perfume houses prefer synthetic oils, Bakry said.

Nevertheless, Oman has been trying to recapture its age-old tra-

dition of perfume-making, believed to have been born in this part of the world.

In 1983, Oman's Sabco group, owned by the country's royal family, commissioned Parisian perfumer Guy Robert to produce a distinctly Omani fragrance.

The result was Amouage, one of the most expensive perfumes in the world and one of the few made with real frankincense.

"Amouage sounds very French, but it is a pure Arabic word which means waves," said Akher Ahmed Hussein, the company's sales and marketing manager.

A tiny 10-milliliter bottle, which comes gilded in 24-carat gold, sells for more than \$400 — slightly more than an ounce of gold at today's prices. (AP)



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THE JERUSALEM POST

F. DAVID RADLER, Chairman, Board of Directors
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Founded in 1932 by GERSHON AGRON

EDITORIAL OFFICES AND ADMINISTRATION The Jerusalem Post Building, P.O. Box 81, Ramat Gan, Jerusalem 91000
Telephone 02-315666. Fax 02-389527. CIRCULATION - 02-315610. Fax 02-389017. ADVERTISING - 02-315608, 02-315637-40.
Telephone 02-315666. Fax 02-389527. POST 26398 (01283) Telephone 02-6390333. Fax 02-6390377. HATIFA: 20 Nordus,
Fax 02-388408. TEL AVIV: 5 Retov Hamagaz, POB 26398 (01283) Telephone 02-6390333. Fax 02-6390377. HATIFA: 20 Nordus,
Hadar Hamagaz, Telephone 04-623166. Published daily, except Saturdays, in Jerusalem, Israel by The Jerusalem Post Ltd. Printed by
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Ofakim as a symptom

ON an economic level, nothing can be said against closing the Ouman textile factory in Ofakim. If anything, criticism should be leveled at the efforts to keep it alive for too long. Particularly inexplicable is the \$1.5 million grant the Industry and Trade Ministry made to the plant only months ago, with the understanding that Ouman will keep this unviable concern going for at least seven years.

Advanced industrial countries find it almost impossible to compete with developing countries in textile manufacturing. The wages of textile laborers in China are less than one tenth of what they are in Israel and under current conditions, the Israeli worker's higher productivity does not make up for the immense gap in overhead. The only way a country like Israel can compete is by switching to the most advanced automation. But this, too, would reduce the number of jobs in the industry.

The decision to close down Ouman was, then, to be expected. The plant's owner, Polgat, is part of the Cial conglomerate which has reached the conclusion it cannot compete on the increasingly open world market while continuing to run losing enterprises. If the decision to shut down appears ruthless, it is because such decisions usually are - although the final step could have been taken with more tact and greater consideration for the workers' feelings.

Ultimately, every citizen will benefit from opening the marketplace to competition from abroad. Consumer prices will go down, local manufacturing will be forced to become more efficient and competitive, and the consumer will enjoy greater variety and higher quality of goods. Even the workers who have just been dismissed in Ofakim will, in the final analysis, gain from the move.

Yet there is a nagging unease about the affair, and not only because it is impossible to ignore the immediate agony of the 230 laid-off workers and their families, and the losses to local businesses which their dismissal will cause.

With the unemployment rate in the country being low, some way will undoubtedly be found to prevent hardship. (If there is one solution which does not seem likely it is that the factory will be taken over by another concern, as was rumored yesterday. The hard economic facts militate against such a rescue operation.)

Far more troublesome is the general situation in Ofakim. Even before the Ouman decision, unemployment in Ofakim was above 13 percent. The firings raised it to 20%. Nor is Ofakim

the only Negev community suffering from disproportionate joblessness and hardship. The malaise is familiar throughout the periphery.

This is because for all the noise about transforming Israel - one of the last centralized, socialist economies in the free world - into a capitalist, free market system, some essential components are still missing.

The government is still far too large and intrusive. It refuses to make real cuts in spending; it employs too large a segment of the work force (including many employees hidden in sub-contracted works); it owns more than 90 percent of the land - including farmer-controlled agricultural tracts near urban areas - and refuses to sell it at reasonable prices; it has not abolished manufacturing and import monopolies nor truly opened the country to imports; it has failed to reduce the unconscionable number of licenses and permits which strangle every business and construction enterprise; and it has failed to eliminate superfluous government offices and curb the growth of the bureaucracy.

The closing of a few unprofitable factories will not transform the economy into a competitive system, free of dangerous dependence on foreign aid and expensive loans; nor will it create a favorable trade balance and attract immigrants from the industrial countries. What is needed is an economic revolution, not spotty patch work.

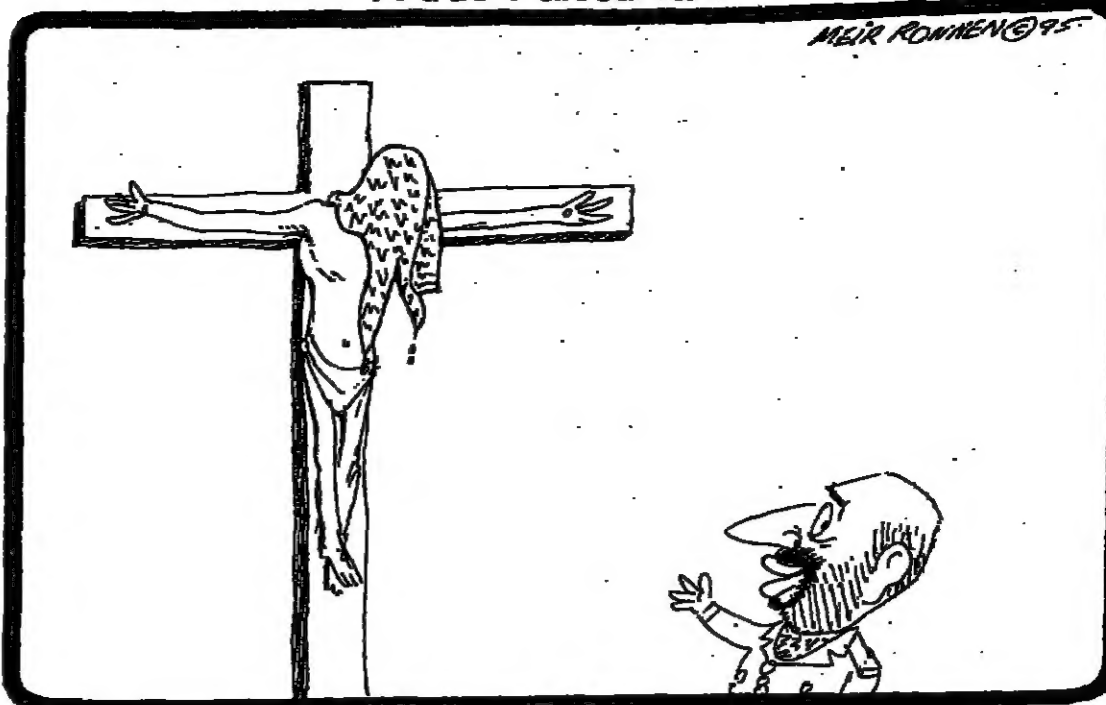
Strangely, in the one area in which governments can and should intervene - infrastructure planning and construction - the government has developed an uncharacteristic diffidence.

Even the immediate solution offered by Polgat to the Ofakim workers - to be employed in other Polgat plants in Beersheba and Kiryat Gat - has been called unrealistic by Industry and Trade Minister Micha Harish, who claims the commuting would be too time consuming.

The chronic unemployment and severe under-development of the periphery could have been cured long ago had the proper infrastructure been built. What is needed first and foremost is a fast railway system which would connect all the Negev towns to one another and to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Only the construction of modern, efficient and fast public transport in this relatively barren half of the country can realize the dream nurtured by David Ben-Gurion and other men and women of vision in Israel's history: the renaissance of the Negev and its full integration into the country's economy.

'A true Palestinian!'



No surrogates, please

MOSHE ZAK

THREE substitutes for Israel's presence on the Golan were recently aired. The intention was to change public opinion to withdrawal.

Substitute no. 1: Setting up American-manned early warning stations on the Golan, which could provide timely warning of possible hostile Syrian action once Israel leaves the Heights.

This suggestion has aroused fierce controversy in Israel, and even in Congress. Most congressmen in both houses expressed reluctance over involving US soldiers in possible conflict.

In the end, the Syrians rejected the proposal out of hand, claiming that land-based warning stations on the Golan manned by foreigners would infringe its sovereignty.

Substitute no. 2: State-of-the-art US armaments and airborne warning stations. There was an attempt to persuade us that these were actually preferable to settlements on the Golan. The settlements, it was argued, do nothing to promote Israel's security - but sophisticated aircraft and missiles would increase Israel's ability to deter Syria from a return to the war option.

The national consensus is that deterrence is essential in peace-time, since an Israel perceived as weak is a temptation to Arab hostility, even after the signing of a peace treaty.

But the principle that peace cannot be concluded without an effective Israeli deterrent has become forgotten in the procedural discussions leading up to the Israeli-Syrian peace talks.

The Syrians and Egyptians want Israel to tie its hands by signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This would mean that Israel's qualitative edge could not prevail over the quantity of the Arab armies.

Thus, instead of working to increase its deterrent ability, Israel now faces pressure to curb its strength.

LAST Friday, Prime Minister Peres made a slip. "Give me peace," he announced, "and I will give up the nuclear [weapons]." He then attempted to correct the slip, saying that he wasn't admitting Israel had nuclear weapons.

Three misleading substitutes have been touted for Israel's presence on the Golan

But you can't give up nuclear weapons if you don't have them in the first place. So the Middle East peace negotiations have now become linked to the nuclear issue.

Egypt and Syria haven't forgotten that Peres's opening bid in the talks on withdrawal from the Golan was the condition that early warning stations be set up on the Heights. They are assuming that the Peres statement on nuclear weapons is also just an opening bid, to be followed by another capitulation.

The essential thing is that they have overcome a hurdle: Israel is now discussing its deterrent capability with the Arab countries. They want to force us to negotiate with them on the issue, believing that a weaker Israel will result.

Substitute no. 3: (Still in the embryonic stage): A US-Israeli defense pact. This has gained wide support among Peres associates.

Egypt's foreign minister and Syria's defense minister have already managed to express their firm opposition to such a means of strengthening Israel. The Syrian minister even warned the US that supporting Israel would damage US interests.

The upcoming visit here by the US defense minister helps foster the illusion that we will indeed obtain a defense pact with the US in return for withdrawing from the Golan. But it won't happen; nor should it. At most, the US will offer a similar pact to the Arabs as well.

The US doesn't want problems with the Arab states that object to an exclusive US-Israel pact. And a pact isn't worth Israel's while anyway, because, as Henry Kissinger once commented, Israel surely wouldn't apply to the International Court of Justice in the Hague were the US unable or unwilling to carry out its defense obligations to it.

The US's help in a crisis would be dictated by its own interests, not by any pact. Kuwait had no defense alliance, but the US mobilized its full strength to drive out the Iraqis. Israel, which has had no need of American soldiers, benefited from a airlift of armaments in the Yom Kippur War. This won't happen if Israel becomes dependent on US soldiers.

All these proposed US substitutes for our presence on the Golan can only weaken our independent deterrent capability, and reduce the chances of a lasting peace.

A stable peace with Syria depends most of all on Israel being strong in itself. Surrogates won't do.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on current affairs.

Culture shock

RACHEL EGLASH

THE morning after my visit to a Kiryat Gat high school where I met a group of disgruntled Ethiopian teenagers around 14 or 15 years old, I asked myself repeatedly: What does their future hold?

On our arrival at the school, the teenagers greeted us with waves and smiles. They acted like typical Israeli kids. We introduced ourselves, and sat and listened to what they had to say.

They complained that they had absolutely nothing to do after school.

What kind of activities would they like? we asked them.

One said he wanted to learn English. Another mentioned computers.

I was surprised. Why should this be a problem? I thought. Of course they can study English or computers after school hours. There are so many workshops and enrichment programs offered throughout the country. These teenagers can easily join one.

We were chatting to them in Hebrew, when one suddenly uttered a significant phrase in English. "Money is power," he said.

Continuing in Hebrew, he explained that he and the other teenagers had no funds to join after-school workshops, and so there was no chance that they could improve their English, computer, or any other skills.

Ethiopian students here are bereft of the opportunities they enjoyed in Ethiopia

I was appalled, then saddened. I thought immediately of their parents - but realized that the families of these young people may not be in the picture where their children's difficulties are concerned.

Newcomers to Israel's social and political system, Ethiopian immigrants send their children to school. The children return home and, not wanting to worry their parents, tell them what they want to hear.

There is no way to determine whether these children are receiving any real help or advice about what to do in those after-school hours.

I AM Ethiopian. I remember growing up in Addis Ababa.

School would finish at about 1 p.m. After that, I would go on to various study groups which would help me with my homework. In the evening, I would sit with my father to review what I had learned during the day.

Coming from this background, one may imagine my shock on seeing Ethiopian students in Israel bereft of the opportunities they enjoyed in Ethiopia.

What makes it all the more upsetting is that Israel is obviously more technologically developed than Ethiopia. It has the means to offer all its citizens possibilities that are out of the reach of the majority of Ethiopians.

For over 1,000 years the Jewish community in Ethiopia maintained its traditions through the education of each successive generation.

The world is developing rapidly, and education is power. If Ethiopian kids don't get the help they need during their formative years, it will be a recipe for disaster.

When will someone lend a hand to enable Ethiopian immigrants to integrate properly into Israel's technologically and educationally oriented society? Shall we wait until it is too late?

Surely the cost and effort involved in helping young Ethiopian Jews achieve a better future in Israel isn't that great.

Are we sufficiently alarmed over the prospect of a black Jewish underclass in a Jewish state? Why is it so difficult for community centers which already exist in the cities to help students like the Ethiopian teenagers we met?

Kiryat Gat is just one example of a growing problem. It needs to be addressed immediately on the government and municipal level.

The writer, who immigrated from Ethiopia in 1989, works for the Israel Association for Ethiopian Jews.

DRIVE CAREFULLY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RATIONAL STANCE

Sir, - I suppose that 90 percent of my letters to the editor are complaints, disagreements, or otherwise negative in character. So, after reading Moshe Kohn's column of December 8, I thought it was only fair to take the time to write a letter of compliment and encouragement once in a while, too. I find that his weekly *A View from Now* articulates a world view with which I have much in common, and does so with a simplicity and clarity that I envy. It is unrealistic to expect to convert committed ideologues with arguments from the other side of the fence, but I would hope that his rational and straightforward stance would help the uncommitted to see Judaism and its political implications in Israel in a more positive light than they are usually portrayed in the secular press.

MORRIS GOLDMAN
Tel Aviv.

LACK OF RESPECT

Sir, - I was surprised and disturbed when I saw on television pictures of the slain prime minister's widow at the funeral of her husband, with her head uncovered. Few will deny that for Jews there are any more significant expressions of their Judaism than that which is demonstrated at the interment of another Jew, and if the funeral is that of a near and dear one, all the more reason for an adherence to the established custom.

If the widow refused, as a matter of principle to have her head covered, even in view of the circumstances and the environment, this one can reluctantly accept. But no, there is no principle whatsoever involved with the wearing of a head covering, because I now saw a television film of Leah Rabin having an audience with the pope in Rome. And she wore a hat.

Just what is it that prompted her that, at a meeting with the leader of another religion, she was prepared to have her head covered but not at the funeral of her late lamented husband in the presence of the head of the state religion of the country which Yitzhak Rabin served so conscientiously for so long with such distinction?

DAVID HAMBURGER
Netanya.

THERAPY FOR SURVIVORS

Sir, - I am a registered psycho-therapist and doctoral research student at Keele University, Staffordshire, England, researching into the experience of therapy for survivors of the Holocaust and the second generation. I would like to discover how helpful - or otherwise - such therapy has been for them. This is new research and will add to the knowledge of people who are working in the field.

I should be most grateful if survivors or second-generation people who have had therapy or counseling (who speak English) and are willing to offer this help to me in my research could contact me c/o Ordman, P.O. Box 1713, Netanya. I would then send them a questionnaire; at the end of this would be an invitation to be interviewed if they were willing. Distance is no object. Complete confidentiality would be maintained at all times.

Equally, if there is any person or organization who would be able to help me contact Holocaust survivors and the second generation who have had therapy, to send them a questionnaire, I should also be pleased to hear from them.

LINDA BERMAN
Netanya.

DISREGARD OF LAW

Sir, - In one sentence, Nasser Yusef, chief of the Palestinian Police, epitomizes (in Steve Rodan's interview with him on December 8) the attitude and expectations of Messrs Arafat and Co. Israel will have to continue transferring to them not only territory and money, but also tens of thousands of stolen cars, with not the faintest intention on their part to round them up and return them to us. "If we gather them," says Nasser Yusef, "it will create an explosion." Should we create an explosion merely for the sake of returning stolen vehicles to their owners?

Is any further proof needed of the total disregard by the Palestine Authority of even the most elementary principles of law and order? Does the government of Israel comprehend to whom it is surrendering power and authority in Judea and Samaria?

EDGAR SAPHIRE
Givatayim.

PRINCESS DIANA'S INTERVIEW

Sir, - Penny Starr's outburst about Princess Diana was hysterical and entirely beside the point ("Channel surfing," November 24). What alternative did she have? The Royal Family is about to throw her out, so she is appealing to the English people for help.

Moreover, should not women show more compassion for Princess Diana who shares the fate of many "ordinary" women when it comes to the power struggle in a marriage where the women are mostly on the losing end? And why belittle her being a nursery-school assistant 15 years ago? Do you need a Ph.D. for common-sense wisdom?

If she is manipulative, good for her. What other fool does she have?

EVELYN COHEN
Kiryat Tivon.

MISINTERPRETED

Sir, - It is right and proper that we clarify the letter you printed on December 15.

Miss Adina Slater's reference to the speech of His Beatitude Patriarch Michel Sabbah at the synod of Bishops of Lebanon, on the basis of the report printed in *L'Osservatore Romano* on December 1, demonstrates that she translated the Italian text badly. She translated the adjective *locato* as "worried" when she should have translated the word as "concerned" or "interested." The corresponding word in French is *concerné*. This is the word the patriarch used in French in the official text of his speech.

The meaning of the phrase is completely different than that which she credited to the patriarch. His Beatitude Patriarch Sabbah wished to draw to the attention of the assembly, composed of all the bishops and Arab personalities of the Middle East, the Jewish reality in positive sense and intention. In his speech, "Jerusalem, throughout the Middle East, is concerned - not worried - by the new reality represented by the Jewish return."

The rest of the letter is such rav-ing nonsense that it does not merit any comment.

The Social Communication Office of the Latin Patriarchate
Jerusalem.

Let us sleep quietly at night

ZE'EV BIELSKI

heaviness. Its priorities and other responsibilities simply don't allow it to.

While fully appreciating the police's internal security efforts, and well aware of its burden, particularly in our part of the country, we cannot accept that citizens of the region should pay a dual price for living there.

A forum of Sharon region mayors could address the security problems of the area's residents

Such a serious situation requires involvement at the highest level of government. Both the police and the insurance companies need the resources to enable them to take concerted, effective action.

Yet, to our profound amazement, absolutely nothing is being done. The cynics among us have suggested that the government, benefiting as it does from taxes paid on new cars purchased to replace stolen ones, isn't in any hurry to act.

Whatever, it is abdication of its responsibility to its citizens, offering them nothing but platitudes.

RECENTLY we were informed that another 1,000 Palestinian prisoners are to be released. Every new wave of releases brings in its wake a new wave of property damage, theft of agricultural equipment, and theft of cars in the Sharon region. It would seem, therefore, that the problem will only be exacerbated.

The contention that this is an

instance of "force majeure," and that citizens should come to terms with it is quite unacceptable. Sharon residents have the right to expect clear and irrefutable responses.

Will a security fence be erected? Will patrols be increased to ensure residents' safety and security? Will the priorities of those charged with operations along the Green Line be reordered?

To date, we mayors have not been apprised of what has been planned, nor have we been given any tools for ensuring the safety of our residents and the physical integrity of their property. Thousands upon thousands of people are affected.

I have spent years conducting a public campaign to muster recognition of the importance of setting up a municipal police force. It would bear direct responsibility for ensuring quality of life in our region, freeing the Israel Police to focus on other security issues. A force of this kind is now more important than ever.

In the wake of the planned withdrawals, we mayors of the Sharon region feel frustrated that the government hasn't seen fit to establish a forum to hear our input on decisions which impact directly upon our residents.

We are left with the heavy feeling that our people may pay a heavy price in terms of personal security and property damage.

I call upon the authorities - now - to set-up a Sharon Region Forum of Mayors.

The ongoing contact such a forum would provide would help ensure that even after the implementation of Oslo 2, residents in all parts of the Sharon Region will be able to live with the feeling that they are secure.

The writer is mayor of Ra'anana.

مكتبة القدس



A valuable lesson about the value of money

PARENTING
RUTH MASON

My five-year-old likes to go into my purse, take my money and pass it out to the kids in his kindergarten. He doesn't do it with malice, but he doesn't listen when I tell him not to. I hate having to hide my purse in my own home. What should I do?

Olgi Baharal, kindergarten teacher with 11 years of experience, suggests:

Tell your child that it is inappropriate to pass out money to his friends in kindergarten, but that he can choose something else to pass out instead. Make a list with him of things that he thinks would be fun to share and then let him choose one. It should be something that children really like, such as little toys, Bamba or cookies that you've baked together at home.

At the same time, the kindergarten teacher needs to be involved. She can explain the limits of the kindergarten to your child: "In our kindergarten, we can share cookies or cake, but not money." You and the teacher should think about what your child gets out of passing out money to his peers. Is he looking for the acceptance of a particular group? Why does he need the positive reaction of the children to some-

thing as powerful as money?

In a different conversation, you should explain to your child what money is for - to buy food, clothes, etc. - and that we need our money for those purposes.

We made aliyah last summer with a second grader who was tested as gifted in the US. We've heard about a program in which gifted children are taken out of school once a week and given special enrichment. We would like our son to participate, but he doesn't yet know enough Hebrew to take the required test. What do you recommend?

Nitza Shahal, director, Department of Gifted Education, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, answers:

New immigrant pupils may be tested individually in English by a psychologist, who must be paid for by the parents. Our department also offers tests in Hebrew, free of charge, to new immigrant pupils on specified dates.

For further information, please contact our office at 2 Devora Hanavia, Jerusalem, tel. (02) 292972, fax 292974.

If you have a question about parenting, write to: Parenting, POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem.

Hijacked children in the Jordan desert

It's been 25 years since Sarah Raab and her children were held hostage by Palestinian air pirates, writes Greer Fay Cashman

SARAH Raab and her five children flew out of Israel 25 years ago. Their destination was New York; instead, the Raabs were forced into Jordan as hostages in a daring Palestinian hijacking.

Their flight was one of three airliners waylaid over Europe in September 1970, by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

Raab, together with her children aged six to 17, had planned to return to New York with El Al, but because of overbooking, they were offloaded onto TWA. The hijacked planes were diverted to Zarqa in Jordan, where David, her oldest son, was woken up in the middle of the night and taken away with all other Jewish men and several girls. The reason given to his distraught mother was that he was of military age, and could therefore not remain with the other passengers.

He was held in captivity for two-and-a-half weeks, during which time neither his father, Rabbi Menachem Raab, in New York, nor his mother and siblings in Jordan, knew anything about his fate or his whereabouts. Sarah Raab had been assured by the terrorists that he was safe and well, but with no word from her son to confirm this, she had to contain her panic beneath a mask of control for the sake of her other children.

She later learned that he had been incarcerated in a storage place for ammunition.

When it became known that terrorists had taken over the plane, Raab told her children to speak only English and instructed the four boys to put away their kippot. But Yaron, 6, refused, saying he was Jewish, and that nothing could make him take it off.

When Raab took it upon herself to ask the Palestinians why the planes had been hijacked, she was told the PFLP wanted to destroy Israel's economy by deter-



A PLO hijacker proudly holds Yaron Raab, 6, a victim of the hijacking. Raab, wearing the terrorist's hat and holding his gun, had refused to remove his kippa during the hijacking. (UPI)

ring visitors. Although the terrorists did not mistreat anyone, conditions on the plane were terrible.

The toilets were stuffed up and the air-conditioning didn't work. For the hapless hostages, it was like sitting in a furnace.

When the Red Cross came to assess the situation, Raab said to them, "It's very hot in here." To which the reply was: "It's very hot for Arab children too."

Arrangements were made to take the passengers to a hotel. Then suddenly they were told that there wasn't enough room at the hotel to accommodate everyone. Those who would be taken

were to be called by name.

"It didn't take us long to realize that only people of Jewish faith would be left on the plane," recalls Raab. "Women who had survived the Holocaust wept because they were afraid they would die in the Jordanian desert."

Raab remembers an occasion when the plane was dark and the terrorists came through the cabin with a flashlight which they beamed into people's faces. A terrified German passenger shouted "I'm not a Jew, I'm a German!" And Raab, unable to stop herself, yelled "Damn you! Now you know what it feels like!"

EVENTUALLY all the passengers were taken off the plane. Raab remembers that PFLP leader George Habash was on the bus which drove them to the Philadelphia and Intercontinental hotels where they stayed briefly. "He lectured us on the housing of poor refugees."

The hijackers were not really violent until US president Nixon announced that America was giving F15 fighter planes to Israel. Then they threw everything out of the suitcases. Raab had purchased a large quantity of Israeli toffee. One of the terrorists put some in his mouth, then spat it out, declaring "I spit on Zionism!"

The pope had meanwhile sent a personal envoy to Amman. And Israel was insisting that the 23 Israeli nationals amongst the prisoners be released together with the other passengers. The Red Cross was negotiating, as were representatives of the US, British, Swiss and German governments.

Eventually, on September 12, the terrorists blew up all three hijacked planes.

That there was no loss of life Raab attributes to King Hussein, who she is convinced was able to control PFLP activities by mediating with Iraq.

"There was nothing that prevented these people from just blowing us up [together with the planes]," she says. "If it would happen today, I think we would all be killed."

Raab still hopes to meet the king and to thank him personally "for saving our lives."

Raab's second-youngest son Noam, who was eight at the time and who has spent most of his life in Jerusalem, observes that the hijacking started the Black September war. "That's when Hussein kicked out the Palestinians," he says.

His own memories of the hijacking are a little hazy, but one of the things that remains in his mind is that someone with a gun, going through the luggage, confiscated his brother Moshe's watch, which was made in Israel, and "threw away my favorite toy - a camel. When we made aliyah three years later, the first thing my parents bought me was a [toy] camel."

Tikva, the only girl in the family, was 11 at the time of the hijacking, and was in the bathroom when the terrorists announced that they had taken over. When she came out, everyone had their hands over their heads and her mother told her that the plane had been hijacked. Her initial response was "You're joking." She soon learned it wasn't funny, and since then refuses to go to the bathroom when flying.

For his part, Noam will not fly on any airline except El Al, and even then always takes extra clothes in his hand luggage; canned goods and an extra set of teffilin "in case I have to stay anywhere for a few days..."

He and his mother remember a scene at the Intercontinental Hotel in Amman. A terrorist was playing with Yaron. Hoisting him into his arms, he kept replacing Yaron's huge blue velvet kippa with his own crimson beret.

Then, seeing a bevy of news photographers, he handed the little boy a Kalashnikov assault rifle. The photo was published all over the world.

Catholic scholars question whether Jesus was an only child

A clear message shines through the Christmas creche, with its depiction of a demure Mary and bearded Joseph flanking a halo-lit baby Jesus in a rustic manger: Jesus was an only child.

No brothers and sisters were tugging at Mary's robe.

It's a portrait rooted in Christian teachings going back to the late third century and backed since then by the Roman Catholic Church, which has held fast to the ancient doctrine declaring Jesus' mother Mary a lifelong virgin.

This is despite more than a half dozen references in the New Testament to Jesus' brothers - including James, head of the early church of Jerusalem - and sisters.

But now, some Catholic scholars are gingerly voicing the view - long held by Protestants - that Mary had other chil-

dren besides Jesus. So far they have avoided a fight with the Vatican by not directly challenging doctrine, but their expansion of the "holy family" of Christmas lore is bound to dismay many Catholics.

Catholicism has long declared that when the Gospels described Jesus' siblings, or the apostle Paul mentioned the "brothers of the lord," the words - translated from the Greek - really meant "cousins" or "relatives."

Four years ago however, Father John P. Meier declared that on historical grounds "the most probable opinion is that the brothers and sisters of Jesus were true siblings."

His statements drew immediate objections from some conservative Catholics. "If Meier does in reality dissent from the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity, how can he be allowed to continue his teaching at the Catholic

University of America?" asked a priest who is editor of *The Catholic Answer*.

Yet the widely respected Meier still teaches at the Vatican-chartered university in Washington DC, and is continuing his work on a multivolume study of the historical Jesus. And in books published this year, three more Catholic American biblical specialists have agreed that Jesus had brothers and sisters.

"No linguistic evidence warrants our interpreting Gospel passages about Jesus' brothers and sisters as his cousins," wrote Notre Dame scholar Jerome Neyrey in the new HarperCollins *Encyclopedia of Catholicism*. Neyrey said the word used in the original Greek could not be interpreted as "cousins."

Among the references in the New Testament to Jesus' siblings is one in the Gospel of Mark - the oldest Gospel, generally considered to have been

written about 40 years after Jesus' death - which names four brothers and an unstated number of sisters.

In the gospel account, villagers in Nazareth, startled by Jesus' display of wisdom, ask incredulously: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters with us?" (The Jews referred to is not Judas Iscariot, the disciple the Gospels say betrayed Jesus to the Romans, but the New Testament figure Jude, known to Catholics as the patron saint of hopeless causes.)

In their gospels, Mark, Matthew and Luke also tell a story about Jesus' "mother and brothers" standing outside a crowd gathered around Jesus.

In her commentary on the New Testament, Catholic scholar Pheme Perkins of Boston College repeatedly uses the biblical identification of James as

Jesus' brother. But she said the new research does not rule out the possibility that Mary could have remained a virgin, and the references to Jesus' brothers and sisters could be to Joseph's children from a previous marriage.

But Perkins concedes there is a gap between the attitudes of Catholic Bible scholars and the faithful in the pews, who are often devoted to the image of Mary as virgin, the holy mother of God.

"If you found a birth certificate saying that James was the child of Mary," she said, "it wouldn't distress the academic community, but it would distress the faith community."

Luke Timothy Johnson, another Catholic scholar who discards the "cousins" explanation, finds compensating value in the image of Jesus as one of many children.

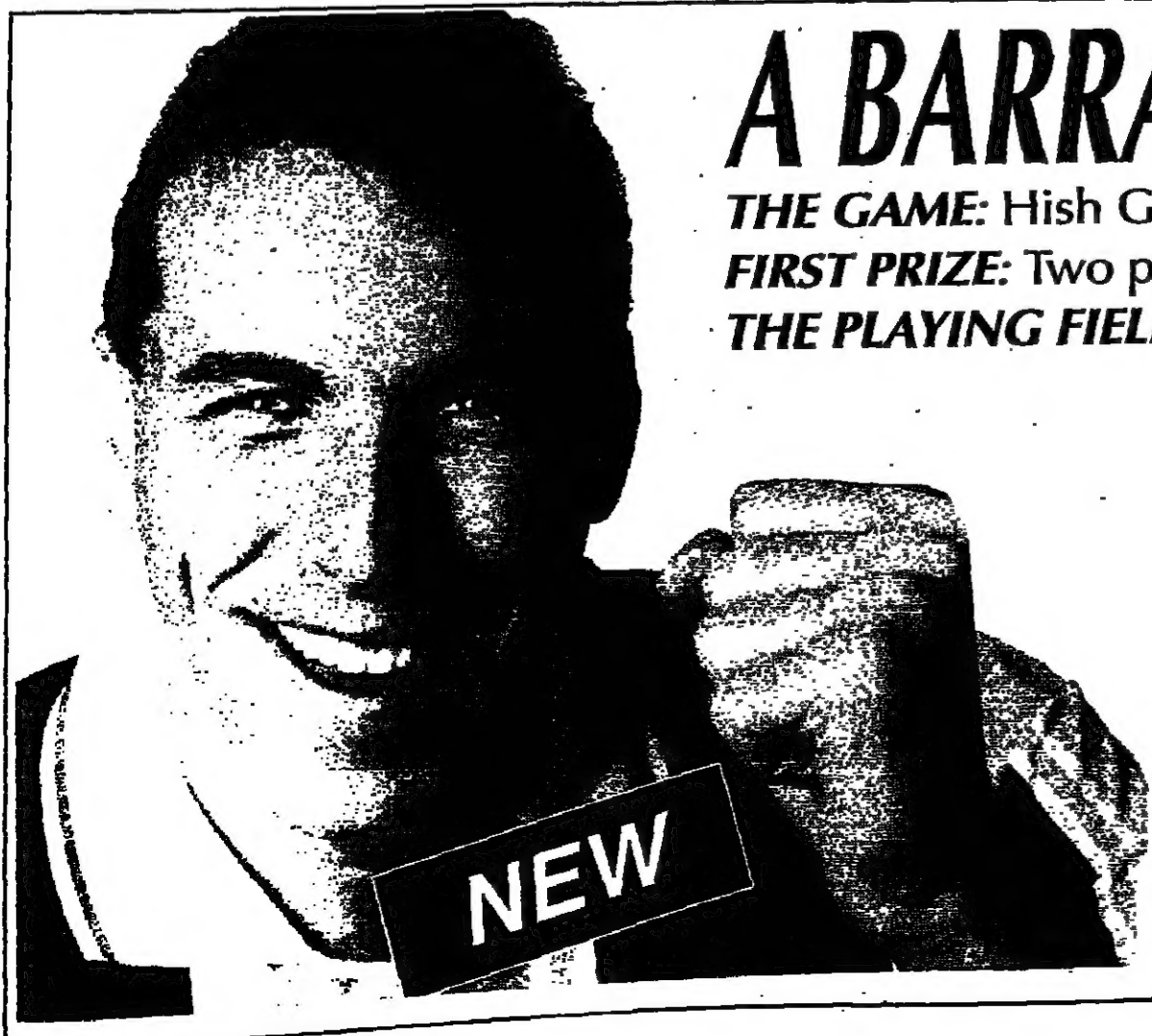
"Certainly, if Jesus had brothers and

sisters, then the humanity of Jesus and the motherhood of Mary takes on a richer resonance - their experiences were more like other people's than we might have imagined," said Johnson, a former priest who teaches at the ecumenical Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta.

For the most part, Jesus' siblings do not enjoy a good reputation in the New Testament. They are portrayed as skeptical non-believers during Jesus' lifetime - "For not even his brothers believed in him," comments the Gospel of John - who then enjoyed unexplained status as leaders after his death.

Given the sensitivity of the issue of Mary's virginity, the Catholic biblical specialists should be praised for their integrity, according to Presbyterian scholar James Brashers.

"It is really quite a courageous step," he said. (Los Angeles Times)



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BUSINESS & FINANCE

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27, 1993

Probe begun into FIBI sale

THE Bank of Israel has begun an investigation into the transfer of control of First International Bank (FIBI), following a suit filed by businessman Jack Nasser against the Safra family, the current owners of the bank, *Globe* reported yesterday.

As the result of the suit, the Tel Aviv District Court on Monday issued a temporary injunction against the Safra family preventing them from carrying out any transactions with shares they own in FIBI. The injunction is in effect until January 9, when the

court will hear Nasser's suit. Moshe Mandelbaum, who was Bank of Israel governor when Nasser bought control of FIBI holdings, said he was never aware that there had been any agreement between Nasser and Safra regarding the transfer of shares. He stressed, however, that monitoring of bank share sales was the work of Galia Maor, who was the supervisor of banks at the time. Maor, currently managing director of Bank Leumi, was said to be on vacation and could not be reached for comment.

Banks told to check managers' performance in overextending credit

EVELYN GORDON

BANKS are being asked to re-evaluate the performance of both branch managers and regional managers in connection with the overextension of credit to customers in 1993/94. Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles told the Knesset Finance Committee's capital markets subcommittee yesterday.

For several months prior to the stock market crash in early 1994, the banks had been aggressively soliciting customers to take out loans and invest the money in mutual funds. When the market fell, many customers lost all they had and blamed the banks for having encouraged them to take out the loans without warning them of the risks.

Abeles told the subcommittee that the Bank of Israel has so far

received some 1,400 complaints from customers, of which it has finished dealing with 1,010 so far. Thirty-two percent of the complaints have been found to be justified, up from an earlier level of 25%. About 15% of the customers have appealed the central bank's decision, he said.

In addition, some of the customers who filed complaints withdrew them because they decided to settle directly with the bank.

In many of these cases, the settlement was too generous to the bank, Abeles said.

There are also thousands of customers who never complained to the central bank because they negotiated compensation deals directly with the banks in the first place, he said.

Abeles: Lending ability of banks to real estate sector has been exhausted

'Overextension may cause banks to collapse'

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE banks have exhausted their lending ability to the real estate sector and might have to set aside 20 percent to 40% of their capital for doubtful debts, Supervisor of Banks Ze'ev Abeles warned yesterday at the Israel Management Center's annual real estate conference.

The real estate sector has failed to repay 10%-20% of the credit extended to it, and this overextension might even cause the collapse of the banking sector, Abeles said.

He added that new limitations will be imposed on banks if they exceed the Bank of Israel's 20% cap on credit that can be extended to any individual sector.

According to existing regulations, banks that extend more than 20% of their credit portfolio to any one sector are instructed to set aside provisions for doubtful debts.

Abeles said the banks' existing credit backing to the real estate sector has reached 22% of the banks' total credit portfolio.

He proposed that contractors seek other sources of financing to back real estate projects.

"I admit it is not possible to raise capital on the exchange, because of the situation currently prevailing on the stock market, but in the future the situation will improve, and it will be possible," Abeles said. "In the meantime, contractors can raise money via loans from foreign banks and



Abeles: New limitations will be imposed if banks exceed the 20% cap on credit for any individual sector. (Tav Or)

non-bank companies like provident funds. The funds are able to extend about NIS 10 billion in the real estate sector."

He also proposed the creation of real estate investment trusts, which are very popular in the US but have not yet been established here.

Mordechai Yona, president of the Association of Contractors and Builders, said the building sector will not be able to continue building unless its equity capital is increased.

"Without credit it is not possible to keep things moving," said Yona. "We will have to build less

since we won't have the capital to meet market demand and requirements. I do not want to expand on what the supervisor said regarding credit restriction, but it is apparent that he is not familiar with the sector. The banks are not taking risks."

Yona said contractors build in accordance with sales, adding that only 2.5% of the apartments constructed in 1995 have not been sold, compared with 8% in 1988 and 1989.

"There are very few situations whereby banks have lost money from real estate companies," said Yona. "Market stability, in addition to the banking sector's close supervision, has reduced risks."

Yona proposed that the government provide banks with the guarantee to extend credit to the real estate sector.

"If the government wants us to continue building, with only a fixed equity capital, they have to guarantee our loans to the banking system since we can not turn to the stock exchange for additional capital," Yona said.

He rejected recent predictions by US experts that housing prices here will drop by up to 30% within the next few years.

"I forecast prices will remain stable within the next few years," he said. "This year prices stabilized, and we experienced a real rise of between 3% and 3.5%."

According to Yona, one of the real estate sector's most serious problems is a shortage of workers.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Matav Cable Communications announced yesterday it is planning to raise between \$50 million and \$75m. through a share issue abroad. Rachel Neiman

Decision Systems Israel (DSI) has announced it will develop message switch systems (MSS) with MCI subsidiary Systemhouse (SHL). Total investment in MSS will be \$2.8m., of which SHL's investment will be \$1.9m. and DSI's \$900,000. DSI will receive \$250,000 from SHL and a \$556,000 grant from the BIRD Foundation. Rachel Neiman

Vision Care, the Yavne-based manufacturer of an intra-ocular telescopic lens for cataract transplants, announced yesterday it will execute a 25 percent private placement. The \$2m. share placement will be executed within the next two months. Rachel Neiman

The Negev retail chain, part of the Negev Ceramics group, this week signed five contracts totaling NIS 1.3m. - all of them in Jerusalem. Negev will supply flooring to the Zipori Center, the Prime Minister's Office, the Cairo-Amman Bank, the Gloria Hotel and 24 luxury cottages in Malha. Negev recently signed a NIS 3m. contract to supply Ben and Jerry's (Israel) for the next two years. Rachel Neiman

English book available on firms listed on Two-Sided Index: The Tel Aviv Stock Exchange has released the TASE-100 Guide, an English-language handbook to the companies listed on the Two-Sided Index. The handbook is available through the TASE spokesman's office. Rachel Neiman

Topap has been awarded first prize as McDonald's International's best french fry supplier of the year. Rachel Neiman

Promedico, the pharmaceutical importer and wholesaler, announced yesterday it will purchase 26% of Medilene and 26% of its affiliate Medibrands.

Medilene, owned by Stelo Robinson, employs 60 people. The company imports Smith Kline and Beecham products and ROC cosmetics, among others. Medibrands, a pharmaceutical and cosmetics importer, is currently constructing a pharmaceutical factory in Yokneam. Promedico, owned by the Iselzon family, has 180 workers. Rachel Neiman

Japanese investment groups interested in market here: Some of Japan's largest investment groups have expressed interest in launching investment activities here, following a seminar conducted by Bank Hapoalim in Tokyo.

Participants included top executives of Sumitomo Bank, Fuji Bank, Sakura Bank, and concerns such as Marubeni, Tomem, Mitsui and Mitsubishi, Hapoalim said yesterday. Other participants included Nomura Securities, Sanyo Securities, Yamaichi Securities, Daiwa Institute of Research and Kanematsu Corp.

Israel-Japan trade has grown to \$2 billion annually. Japan is now Israel's largest export market after the US. Rachel Neiman

Transport deal with Jordan expected soon

RACHEL NEIMAN

THE Israel-Jordan trade pact, set to go since October and delayed by its sister transport agreement, may soon be on its way.

The transport deal could be signed within two months, Transport Ministry representative Omiel Schneller said yesterday.

Speaking at a conference yesterday in Tel Aviv, hosted by the Chambers of Commerce, Customs and VAT director Aryeh Zeif said that King Hussein plans to visit Israel next month, and he "requested that the government be ready to sign the agreement then. Everything is ready and in place."

"What has delayed the transport agreement is everything concerned with import and export between the Palestinian Authority and Jordan," said Transport Ministry representative Omiel Schneller, who added he hoped the full transport deal would be finalized within two months.

Signing the air transport agreement, whose negotiations ended last week, was put off due to the Jordanian transport minister's illness. "We expect this to be signed by Ramadan on January 20," Schneller said.

Israel had slowed down negotiations by in-

sisting that air cargo land only at Ben Gurion Airport.

"We have both security considerations and preservation of economic interests," Schneller said, adding that daily passenger flights would hopefully land at Tel Aviv's Sde Dov terminal.

The planned Shalom air transport terminal on the Eilat-Akaba border will use the current Akaba airfield for takeoff. The Arava crossing eventually will be combined with the Shalom terminal.

After the transport deal is signed, private cars holding permits (valid for 30 days) will be allowed to cross the border at the Arava and Sheikh Hussein crossings. Travelers arriving by car must have an international (laminated) drivers license.

Cars entering from Israel will be affixed with special tourist license plates, while Jordanians driving into Israel will use their own plates for identification.

Entry will be permitted to privately owned four wheeled vehicles only, and not to rent-a-

cars, tourist vehicles or motorcycles.

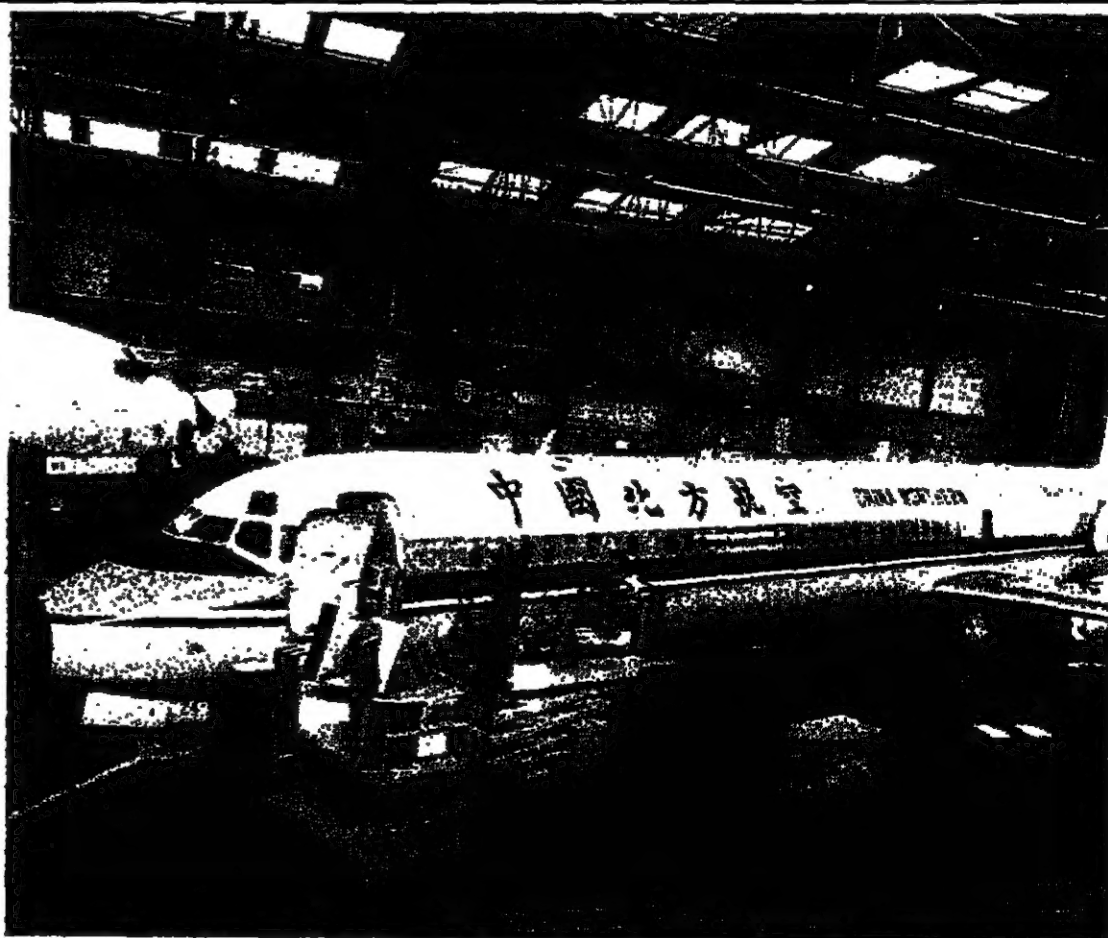
Bus lines between Tel Aviv, Haifa, Irbid, Amman and Akaba will be operated by three bus companies. Egged did not win any part of the contract.

To protect Israeli trucking interests, a maximum of 180 Jordanian trucks at a time will be allowed here. All trucks transporting to Akaba must be Israeli, except for cargo imported to the PA from countries with whom Israel has no relations.

A 12-meter-wide bridge is planned to replace the bridge at the Sheikh Hussein crossing, which is narrow and unable to bear loads over 35 tons.

Future infrastructure developments are expected to include roads connecting Haifa, Beit She'an and Irbid; Gaza, Allenby Bridge and Amman; Jordan and Egypt via Eilat; Highway 45 passing through Atlat and Anatot; and the North-South highway connecting Eilat to Syria.

Planned train infrastructure include railways from Haifa to Irbid, Dar'a and onto Europe; from Israel's central region to Eilat-Akaba; and from El-Arish to Gaza.



Workers at Israel Aircraft Industries' Bedek Aviation plant in Lod yesterday begin inspection and repair work on a China Northern Airliner jet, the first Chinese aircraft to be worked on here. The plane, undergoing a 15,000-hour inspection, will undergo repairs to its interior and its mechanical systems. Work also began recently on an Air India jet, the first plane from that country to be repaired and inspected here.

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Standards Institute lashes out at critics

RACHEL NEIMAN

THE Standards Institute of Israel (SII) went on the offensive yesterday, following criticism from importers.

"Of late there has been a campaign to delegitimize the institute's name," SII president Amos Berkovich said. "These attacks are meant to undermine our most precious asset - the public trust." Berkovich attacked "interested parties in the Chambers of Commerce" who had "spread lies and fiction."

The SII first came under attack in August, when the Chambers of Commerce issued a report entitled "The Cost of the Standards Institute to the Taxpayer."

According to the report, the main problems were that "standards formulated [were] weighted significantly toward industrialists; inspection procedures were prejudiced against importers; and the entity determining standards was also the entity determining testing procedures, executing tests and enjoying the profits."

The SII issued a list yesterday showing inspections as a fractional part of overall import costs but did not release figures regarding salaries, profits or revenues.

Chamber of Commerce managing director Zvi Amit said he stood by the report, calling the SII "a monopoly."

"They have been attacked - and justifiably," he said. "The SII has succeeded in preventing implementation of the government's decision," referring to a 1991 Treasury department recommendation that SII's testing activity be separated from its standards awarding activity.

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Price controls on frozen meat to be eased

Jerusalem Post Staff

THE directors-general of the Industry and Trade, Finance and Agriculture ministries decided yesterday to begin removing supervision of frozen meat prices.

The decision was in line with the 1994 privatization of meat imports, which aimed to bring about an improvement in the quality and selection of imported meat.

At their meeting yesterday, the officials decided that competition in the meat importing business had grown sufficiently to justify a gradual lifting of price controls.

Some 40,000 tons of frozen meat are imported here each year, most of it from South America.

These imports are in addition to about 20,000 tons of meat produced locally.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS

Patish (foreign currency deposit rates) (26.12.95)			
Currency (deposit term)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	4.750	4.825	4.825
U.S. dollar (\$50,000)	4.500	4.500	4.500
German mark (DM 200,000)	2.375	2.350	2.375
Swiss franc (SF 200,000)	0.500	0.575	0.500
Yen (10 million yen)			

(Rates vary higher or lower than indicated according to deposit)

Shekel Foreign Exchange Rates* (26.12.95)			
Currency basket	Buy	Sell	Rep. Rate*
U.S. dollar	3.1387	3.1828	3.1700
German mark	2.1786	2.2147	2.2000
French franc	4.8306	4.9185	4.8500
Japanese yen (100)	0.0053	0.0054	0.0053
Swiss franc	1.9472	1.9785	1.9600
British pound	0.4722	0.4798	0.4750
Scandinavian krona	0.4659	0.4719	0.4680
Danish krona	0.0054	0.0055	0.0054
Portuguese escudo	2.2688	2.3388	2.3000
Australian dollar	2.2820	2.3808	2.3300
S. African rand	0.0056	0.0058	0.0057
Belgian franc (10)	1.0003	1.0076	1.0040
Austrian schilling (10)	3.0913	3.1309	3.1100
Italian lira (100)	1.7703	1.8092	1.7900
Spanish peseta (100)	3.8943	4.0286	3.9600
Irish punt	4.9883	5.0790	5.0300
Spanish peseta (100)	2.6708	2.8123	2.7400

* These rates vary according to bank. ** Bank of Israel.

SOURCE: BANK LEUMI

SA makes strong start

PORT ELIZABETH (Reuters) - Darryl Cullinan's dashing batting led South Africa to 230 for four wickets at the close on the first day of the fourth Test against England yesterday.

The 28-year-old mixed attack and defense with perfect control to finish the day with an unbeaten 83 from 162 deliveries with 13 powerful boundaries.

His fourth wicket partnership of 118 with Jonty Rhodes rescued South Africa from a precarious 89 for three wickets after Hansie Cronje won the toss and opted to bat first on a low, slow batting wicket that discouraged aggressive shot-making.

Cullinan defended stoutly and waited patiently for the bad ball which he attacked with full strength.

The pace of the day's play was set in the morning session when South Africa managed just 63 runs for the loss of Andrew Hudson on a wide away swing from Dominic Cork on 31 to give Jack Russell a simple catch.

South African captain Cronje took 24 deliveries to score his first run and contributed just four to a second wicket partnership of 28 with Gary Kirsten before frustration forced him into a lofted drive to Mike Atherton at short extra cover.

Atherton, who took the catch brilliantly, had moved himself into place just a few deliveries earlier than he had the added pleasure of seeing Kirsten fall three overs later for 51.

It was Kirsten's eighth half century in 19 Tests but three balls after reaching the landmark he edged Mark Iltis to Graham Thorpe at first slip and departed after 130 balls and nine fours.

But Rhodes lived up to his reputation as a man for a crisis and his 49 helped South Africa to recover to 207 for four. He was out after hooking Cork into Robin Smith's midriff at square leg.

It was Cullinan's eighth Test half century to add to his one



ROCK STEADY - South Africa's Darryl Cullinan hits out on the way to an undefeated 83 yesterday. (Reuters)

century in 18 Tests. It was also one of his hardest.

"Like most England bowling attacks I seemed to get a half volley about once a month. They made us work very hard for our runs," Cullinan said.

"As people could see, the wicket is not easy. Although 230 runs is not a lot for a full day's play, I think it's about par for the course for St. George's Park."

"(Coach) Bob Woolmer emphasized after the last Test that we had to get through the 30s and 40s and push on to a big score."

"It's obviously vital to continue

in the same way tomorrow morning because we need to be looking at a total of around 400...we think we can get there."

South Africa first innings
A.J. Hudson c Russell b Cork 31
G.Kristen c Thorpe b Iltis 51
D.Cullinan not out 83
H.Cronje c Atherton b Martin 53
D.Cullinan not out 48
J.Rhodes c Smith b Cork 48
B.McMillan not out 3
Extras (b-s nb-r) 230
Total (for four wickets) 230
Fall of wickets: 1-57 2-85 3-89 4-207
To bat: D.Richardson, S.Pollard, C.Mshawe, A.Donald, F.Ajwa
Bowling (to date): Cork 23-5-57-2 (nb-4), Iltis 23-6-50-1, Martin 22-5-46-1, Hingworth 18-5-51-3, Iltis 4-0-1-0
England: M.Atherton, A.Stewart, J.Gallian, G.Thorpe, G.Hick, R.Smith, J.Russell, D.Cork, R.Livingston, P.Martin, M.Iltis

LONDON (AP) - Tottenham again squandered a chance of leading to second place in the Premier League yesterday when it labored to a 0-0 tie with lowly Southampton on an icy field at The Dell.

Middlesbrough also had a chance to go second, its highest ever position in the league, but was crushed 4-0 by Everton where Graham Stuart scored twice.

Arsenal overpowered struggling Queens Park Rangers 3-0 with two goals from Paul Merson and another from Ian Wright, while Wimbledon came from behind to win 2-1 at Chelsea, its first success for 15 games.

An early goal by Jason Lee fired Nottingham Forest to a 1-0 victory over Sheffield Wednesday.

Aston Villa-Liverpool and West Ham-Coventry were called off because of frozen fields. The biggest game of the week is second place Manchester United against leader Newcastle today.

Arsenal 3, QPR 0 (1-0)
Wright fired Arsenal ahead a minute before half time at Highbury when he turned in a right wing cross from Paul Dickov.

Chelsea 1, Wimbledon 2 (1-2)
Romanian international Dan Petrescu shot Chelsea ahead in the 11th minute from pass by Gavin Peacock. But Robbie Earle headed Wimbledon level in the 34th and then provided the center for Edan Elzoku to head another in the 38th minute.

Everton 4, Middlesbrough 0 (2-0)
Craig Short gave Everton a 10th minute lead with a header from Anders Limpar and Stuart tapped in the second in the final minutes of the first half when Boro failed to clear a corner.

Stuart struck again in the 60th min-

ute when goalkeeper Gary Walsh palmed a corner to him, and Russian international winger Andrei Kanchevskis netted the fourth in the 66th minute after more hesitancy in the visitor's defense.

Forest 1, Sheffield Wed. 0 (1-0)
Jason Lee headed home a right wing corner from Ian Wooten for his seventh strike of the season to give Forest a sixth minute lead and it proved to be the only goal of the game.

Southampton 0, Tottenham 0
Tottenham, surprisingly held 2-2 at home by last place Bolton on Saturday.

DIVISION ONE: Barnsley 3, Stoke 1; Charlton 2, Portsmouth 1; Reading 0, Derby 1; Norwich 0, Southampton 1; Port Vale 3, West Bromwich 1; Sheffield United 1, Birmingham 1; Tranmere 2, Oldham 0; Wolverhampton 1, Millwall 1; Portsmouth 2, Crystal Palace 1; Luton, Leicester v. Ipswich, Sunderland v. Grimsby, Watford v. Reading.

SCOTTISH PREMIER: Rangers 3, Kilmarnock 0; Dundee United 1, Aberdeen 1; Hearts v. Motherwell, Partick v. Hibernian, Raith v. Celtic.

day, again struggled against lower opposition. England forward Teddy Sheringham, scorer of 15 goals this season, missed two opportunities.

PREMIER LEAGUE: Arsenal 3, Queens Park Rangers 0; Blackburn 2, Manchester City 0; Chelsea 1, Wimbledon 2; Everton 4, Middlesbrough 0; Nottingham Forest 1, Sheffield Wednesday 0; Southampton 0, Tottenham 0; Portsmouth: Aston Villa v. Liverpool, West Ham v. Coventry. Playing today: Bolton v. Leeds, Manchester United v. Newcastle.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Newcastle	19	14	3	2	40	18	45
Man Utd	19	10	8	4	36	22	38
Tottenham	19	10	8	3	26	19	35
Liverpool	19	10	4	5	34	18	34
Arsenal	20	9	6	5	23	18	33
Middlesbrough	20	8	6	6	23	18	33
Aston Villa	19	9	5	5	25	15	32
Nottingham Forest	19	10	7	1	29	12	31
Blackburn	20	8	4	8	31	25	28
Leeds	18	8	4	6	29	25	28
Chelsea	20	7	7	6	21	28	27
Everton	20	7	5	8	27	22	26
West Ham	19	6	5	8	21	23	23
Sheff. Wed.	20	6	4	10	20	30	19
Southampton	20	4	7	9	19	30	19
Wimbledon	20	4	6	10	26	40	18
Derby	19	3	6	10	15	29	15
Cardiff City	20	4	4	12	10	30	16
Coventry	19	3	6	10	25	41	15
Bolton	19	2	4	13	18	38	10

Cowboys rout Cardinals, regular season ends

TEMPE, Arizona (AP) - The Dallas Cowboys earned home-field rights throughout the conference playoffs, and got Emmitt Smith one of the NFL's most prized records in the process.

Smith had the NFL rushing title wrapped up before Monday night's game against the Arizona Cardinals. But he needed one touchdown to break the league record of 24 in a season, set by Washington's John Riggins in 1983.

Smith's 3-yard scoring run came with 5:49 left in the 37-13 victory, the final game of the NFL's regular season.

Kevin Williams of the Cowboys closed his third year in the league with a career day, catching touchdown passes of 25 and 48 yards from Troy Aikman among his nine grabs for 203 yards.

Brock Marion contributed to the Cowboys' quick start by returning an interception 32 yards for a touchdown in the first quarter, and Chris Boniol had field goals for Dallas of 39, 23 and 24

yards. The Cowboys (12-4) lost the home-field advantage to San Francisco last year, and dropped a 38-28 decision to the 49ers in the NFC championship game.

This time, the right to play at home until the Super Bowl was the only thing at stake for the Cowboys, who claimed their fourth straight NFC East title and got next week off when Chicago beat Philadelphia on Sunday.

GUESS WHICH?

Which Pro Football Hall of Famer gave up two home runs to Babe Ruth the year he hit 60?

Morris (Red) Badgro
Moe Berg
Earl (Dutch) Clark
Ernie Nevers

Answer tomorrow.
Answer to yesterday's "Guess Which": The Pittsburgh Steelers changed to the T-formation in 1952. Until then, they had run from the single wing formation.

1995 NFL FINAL STANDINGS

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA	Home	Away	AFC	NFC	Div
East	10	6	0	.625	350	316	5-3-0	4-4-0	7-5-0	3-1-0	6-2-0
Buffalo	9	7	0	.563	331	316	5-3-0	4-4-0	7-5-0	2-2-0	5-2-0
Indianapolis	9	7	0	.563	338	322	5-3-0	4-4-0	7-5-0	2-2-0	5-2-0
Miami	8	10	0	.444	275	377	3-5-0	5-5-0	6-6-0	2-2-0	3-4-0
New England	8	10	0	.444	275	377	3-5-0	5-5-0	6-6-0	2-2-0	3-4-0
NY Jets	3	13	0	.188	223	384	2-6-0	1-7-0	3-8-0	0-4-0	1-7-0
Central	11	5	0	.688	407	327	6-2-0	5-3-0	9-3-0	2-2-0	6-2-0
Pittsburgh	7	9	0	.438	349	374	3-5-0	4-4-0	6-7-0	2-2-0	4-4-0
Cincinnati	7	9	0	.438	348	374	3-5-0	4-4-0	6-7-0	2-2-0	4-4-0
Houston	5	11	0	.313	289	356	3-5-0	2-6-0	4-8-0	1-3-0	3-5-0
Cleveland	4	12	0	.250	275	404	2-6-0	2-6-0	4-8-0	0-4-0	4-4-0
Jacksonville	13	3	0	.813	358	241	8-0-0	5-3-0	10-2-0	3-1-0	8-0-0
West	9	7	0	.563	321	323	5-3-0	4-4-0	6-6-0	3-1-0	4-4-0
Kansas City	8	8	0	.500	383	356	5-3-0	3-5-0	5-7-0	3-1-0	3-5-0
San Diego	8	8	0	.500	358	345	6-2-0	2-6-0	8-6-0	2-2-0	3-5-0
Seattle	8	8	0	.500	358	345	6-2-0	2-6-0	8-6-0	2-2-0	3-5-0
Denver	8	8	0	.500	358	345	6-2-0	2-6-0	8-6-0	2-2-0	3-5-0
Oakland	8	8	0	.500	358	345	6-2-0	2-6-0	8-6-0	2-2-0	3-5-0
National	12	4	0	.750	435	291	6-2-0	6-2-0	4-0-0	6-4-0	5-3-0
East	10	6	0	.618	318	336	6-2-0	4-4-0	1-3-0	3-5-0	7-1-0
Philadelphia	8	10	0	.444	326	359	4-4-0	2-6-0	4-8-0	0-4-0	4-4-0
Washington	5	11	0	.313	280	340	3-5-0	2-6-0	4-8-0	0-4-0	4-4-0
NY Giants	4	12	0	.250	275	422	3-5-0	1-7-0	1-3-0	3-8-0	1-7-0
Arizona	11	5	0	.688	404	314	7-1-0	4-4-0	4-0-0	7-5-0	5-3-0
Green Bay	10	6	0	.625	358	326	7-1-0	3-5-0	3-4-0	7-5-0	5-3-0
Chicago	9	7	0	.563	332	360	5-3-0	4-4-0	2-2-0	7-5-0	4-4-0
Minnesota	8	8	0	.500	412	385	6-2-0	2-6-0	3-1-0	5-7-0	3-8-0
Tampa Bay	7	9	0	.438	238	335	5-3-0	2-6-0	2-2-0	5-7-0	2-6-0
West	11	5	0	.688	457	258	6-2-0	5-3-0	3-1-0	8-4-0	5-3-0
San Francisco	9	7	0	.563	382	349	7-1-0	2-6-0	2-2-0	7-5-0	5-3-0
Atlanta	7	9	0	.438	309	418	4-4-0	3-5-0	1-3-0	6-6-0	4-4-0
St. Louis	7	9	0	.438	289	325	5-3-0	2-6-0	3-1-0	5-7-0	3-8-0
Carolina	7	9	0	.438	318	346	4-4-0	3-5-0	4-0-0	3-8-0	3-5-0
New Orleans	7	9	0	.438	318	346	4-4-0	3-5-0	4-0-0	3-8-0	3-5-0

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Gov't assured of majority for budget vote

EVELYN GORDON

THE government yesterday succeeded in assuring itself of enough votes to pass the 1996 budget, but is still grappling with the problem of ensuring that the necessary voters are in the Knesset at the right times.

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat agreed to United Torah Judaism's request that additional classrooms be built for its schools, thereby ensuring that the party's four MKs will abstain on the budget instead of voting against.

MK Avraham Ravitz (UTJ) explained that since Shohat had not given them as much as they wanted, they could not vote for the budget, but he had given them enough that it would not be proper to vote against.

In addition, Tsomet unexpectedly promised to offer Shohat a safety net against extortion from coalition members or allies.

"If the custom of last-minute extortion reappears... we will provide backing... so that the budget will not be expanded," Tsomet leader Rafael Eitan said at a press conference, explaining that increasing the size of the budget would be bad for the entire economy. "We are looking at this matter from a national viewpoint, and not as an attempt to topple the government."

This promise does not extend to opposition amendments, Eitan said, but would offer protection against the demands of the Arab parties or maverick Labor MKs. Shohat is still negotiating with Shas and the Arab parties, however, and it seems likely that he will reach some kind of agree-

ment with one or both.

He has promised the Arab parties a proposal on their demand to eliminate the property tax on inherited property today, since without a solution to this issue, both Hadash and the DAP have sworn to vote against the budget and to leave the blocking majority altogether.

However, it is not clear that the Arabs would really vote against the government on political issues, which is where their support is most needed.

Meanwhile, however, poor coalition discipline enabled the Likud to pass a bunch of amendments to one section of the Economic Arrangements Law at about 7:30 yesterday morning. Likud MKs hid in their cars and then rushed in for the votes, and passed the amendments by such margins as 14-11.

The defeat is no more than a nuisance to the government, since Knesset Finance Committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor) promptly withdrew the section and returned it to committee, where it was repassed in its original form and returned to the plenum for a revote - with a whole new set of proposed amendments, which could add several hours to the debate.

However, the embarrassment prompted an emergency meeting of the coalition, at which Prime Minister Shimon Peres ordered telegrams sent to all absent MKs demanding their immediate presence. The meeting, said faction chairman Ra'anan Cohen, was meant primarily to chastise errant ministers.



Khazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev (foreground) tours the Knesset yesterday with Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss (center), who explains the photo display mounted in memory of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin. (Isaac Harari)

Khazakh president arrives for state visit

BATSHEVA TSUR and Itim

NURSULTAN Nazarbayev, president of the predominantly Moslem republic of Kazakhstan, began a two-day state visit here yesterday, expressing the hope that his country's economic ties with Israel would be further strengthened.

During a meeting at the Knesset with speaker Shevah Weiss, he said his country would be opening an embassy here shortly. He is expected to announce this today.

At a brief meeting last night with Foreign Minister Elmad Barak, Nazarbayev promised to make inquiries with Teheran as to the fate of missing navigator Ron Arad. The Khazakh president said that though his country maintains excellent ties with Iran, it posed no conflict with its ties to Western countries,

including Israel.

Accompanied by a 110-member delegation - including his foreign minister and four other cabinet ministers, senior government officials and economic experts - Nazarbayev was welcomed here in the morning by President Ezer Weizman and cabinet members at a ceremony at Beit Hanassi.

"I am optimistic that we shall succeed in furthering the good economic ties between us," Nazarbayev said.

The ceremony was momentarily disrupted when two soldiers standing in attention in the honor guard fainted. They were treated on the spot. The two were said to have been

suffering from flu, which was exacerbated by the long wait in the sun.

During the visit, an accord ensuring that economic agreements will be carried out is due to be signed. This follows misunderstandings between Israeli investors, notably Shaul Eisenberg, and the Kazakhstan authorities, Israel Radio reported.

After laying a wreath at prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's grave on Mt. Herzl, Nazarbayev toured Yad Vashem, where he wrote in the guest book: "The Fascists and those who hate human beings reject the right to live granted to man by God. Mankind has to be on its guard to prevent racism and fascism."

Last night, Weizman and his wife, Reuma, hosted a state dinner in honor of the guests.

Knesset to try eliminating filibusters - next year

EVELYN GORDON

THE Knesset House Committee plans to try to eliminate the annual budget filibuster next year, after MKs and Knesset legal advisors heaped scorn on the extremes to which the current system has gone.

However the committee agreed that it would be wrong to try to change the rules in the middle of this year's debate.

Anna Schneider, the Knesset Finance Committee's legal advisor and the person in charge of preparing proposed amendments to the budget and the accompanying Economic Arrangements Law, complained bitterly about the quality of many of the amendments, which are submitted only

because speaking time is allotted strictly according to the number of amendments an MK proposes.

"There were amendments that I was genuinely embarrassed to see," she said, citing examples such as one to move Sde Dov Airport in Tel Aviv into the sea. "The first rule of an amendment is... that any amendment could pass," agreed Knesset legal advisor Yoni Ibar, stressing that it is therefore essential that only reasonable amendments be permitted. The Finance Committee, he added, is especially bad about sending absurd amendments to the plenum.

"The legislature needs to take itself seriously," he concluded. "But today, the legislature does not take itself seriously."

"The great danger of what is happening... is that it will be a severe blow to democracy, because there is a large public that thinks this is a Knesset of clowns," agreed Avraham Poraz (Meretz). "We seem like non-serious people who have been entrusted, to my sorrow, with important affairs of state."

If Israel were a company and

the Knesset its board of directors, he said, no sane person would invest in it.

Silvan Shalom (Likud) was the lone voice on the other side, noting that Israel is hardly the worst abuser of the filibuster. He cited times in the US Senate when a senator simply stood up and began reading the New Testament. Shalom charged that limiting the submission of amendments would interfere with a Knesset member's ability to a message across.

However, both Knesset Speaker Shevah Weiss and committee chairman Elie Goldschmidt (Labor) pointed out that there is a difference between a Senate filibuster, which is just talk, and the Israeli version, which requires submitting ridiculous amendments to enable the filibuster.

At one point the discussion turned vicious, when Dalia Itzik (Labor), at whose request it was held, said Michael Eitan (Likud) "seems to me like [Knesset clown] Yosef Ba-Gad in another suit." Eitan and Dan Tichon (Likud) left the meeting in anger, and both Weiss and Goldschmidt said the insult was out of place, and demanded that Itzik withdraw her words.

Tsomet decision to prevent budget extortion is a recognition of reality

COMMENT

EVELYN GORDON

TSOMET'S decision to give the government a "safety net" against extortion by coalition members and allies was less a political shift than a recognition of reality.

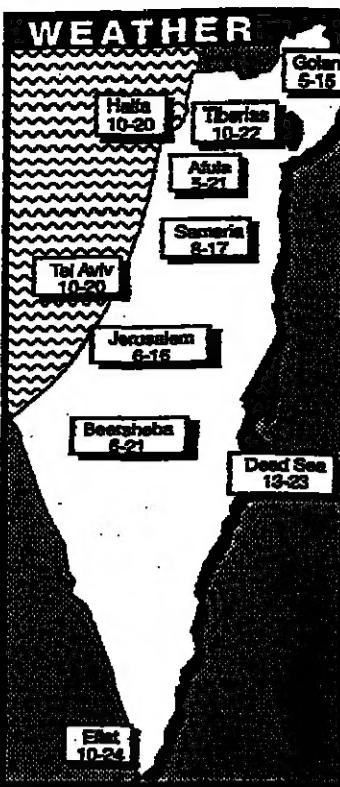
As Tsomet MKs explained, it is clear that the government can muster the votes to pass the budget in any case by giving in to the demands of either the Arab parties or the haredim. And past experience, they say, shows that the government will give in to such demands rather than risk having the budget defeated, since this is the equivalent of losing a no-confidence vote.

Tsomet points to the debacle in May over the expropriation of land in Jerusalem as proof. The Arab parties declared a vote of no-confidence in the government over the issue, and the right-wing parties, desperate to unseat the government at any price, announced that it would vote with the Arabs even though it approved of the expropriations. In order to stay in power, the government therefore gave in to the Arabs' demands at the last minute and canceled the expropriations.

Having concluded that bringing down the government is not a realistic possibility, the only choice remaining, said Tsomet, is whether the budget that ultimately passes is the one the government wants, or one that includes additional special allocations to the Arabs, the haredim, or both.

Clearly, the latter option is worse for the country, the party said, since additional government spending will increase inflation, worsen the balance of payments and have other negative consequences.

"So in this way, we can do something for Israel," explained MK Eliezer Zandberg.



Forecast: Partly cloudy to clear. No change in temperatures.

AROUND THE WORLD

	LOW	HIGH	
Amsterdam	4-12	12-18	cloudy
Berlin	3-11	11-17	cloudy
Buenos Aires	21-28	28-32	partly cloudy
Calcutta	24-32	32-38	cloudy
Chicago	3-11	11-17	cloudy
Copenhagen	4-12	12-18	cloudy
Helsinki	3-11	11-17	cloudy
London	4-12	12-18	cloudy
Los Angeles	16-24	24-30	cloudy
Madrid	10-18	18-24	cloudy
Moscow	3-11	11-17	cloudy
New York	3-11	11-17	cloudy
Paris	4-12	12-18	cloudy

Winning numbers and cards

In last night's weekly Lotto drawing, the winning numbers were 5, 8, 10, 13, 24, 44 and the additional number was 49.

In yesterday's Mifal Hapais daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the eight of spades, 10 of hearts, eight of diamonds and nine of clubs.

Shahak: Outpost abandonment is gross irresponsibility

LIAT COLLINS

THE incident in which paratroopers abandoned their outpost in a protest move was described yesterday by IDF Chief of Staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak as "gross irresponsibility" and "a very serious incident."

"We are talking about 32 long-serving soldiers who decided that their company commander did not respect their rights as old-timers and expressed their opinion by leaving their post," Shahak told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee yesterday. "This is a very serious incident, and 31 of them have been sentenced to 56 days in jail. It was grossly irresponsible and there are no extenuating circumstances. Situations like this do arise occasionally, but that's no excuse. The handling of the matter at the battalion level has not yet ended, and the OC Commander is also continuing to deal with it."

In other matters, Shahak said the IDF's work plan for 1996 had been prepared "with great difficulty" after the IDF had been asked to cut NIS 250 million to NIS 300 million from its budget.

He described 1995 as "a relatively good year."

"An increase in incidents was seen in south Lebanon, but on the other hand a certain drop in incidents was seen in Gaza. Last year in Judea and Samaria was similar to the year before. This is an inexplicably bad year regarding suicides in the IDF, however there has been a drop on the number of road and training accidents."

Shahak said the IDF is investigating the case of a soldier who died from a sudden viral infection, and one who died from an accidental gunshot.

Hizbullah claims it damaged IDF tank in security zone

DAVID RUDGE

AN IDF tank was damaged during a long-range attack by Hizbullah gunmen on an outpost in the eastern sector of the security zone yesterday.

No one in the tank or outpost was injured. IDF gunners returned fire.

Reports from Lebanon said

gunmen fired mortars and Sagger anti-tank missiles at the IDF's Dabsha position in the afternoon, sparking a relatively heavy exchange of fire.

According to the reports, IDF gunners blasted terrorist posi-

tions north of the zone in the Nabatiya area in response to the attack.

Hizbullah, in a statement issued in Beirut, claimed responsibility for the attack, saying it had been witnessed by residents of Nabatiya.

The organization said it had filmed the incident on video, which it intended to screen on its own television station.

Meanwhile Hizbullah's rival, the Amal group, claimed responsibility for a separate attack

on IDF and South Lebanese Army positions in the Kantara region early yesterday morning. There were no casualties among IDF or SLA troops in that incident.

Also yesterday, Lebanese security sources reported that a 7-year-old boy was killed in a land mine explosion near the border, Reuters reported.

The sources said Hussein Naim Ibrahim Mohsen was killed instantly Monday afternoon when he tripped over a land mine in the village of Kfar Kila, just one meter from the border.

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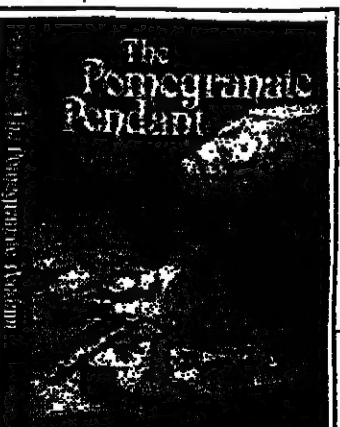
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January 15

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Saturday
January 20

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January 31

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Thursday
February 22

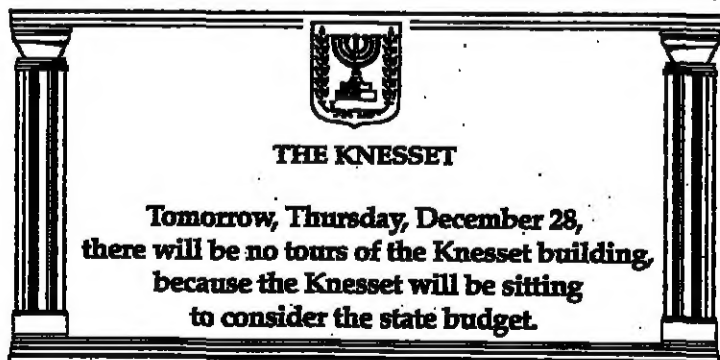
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